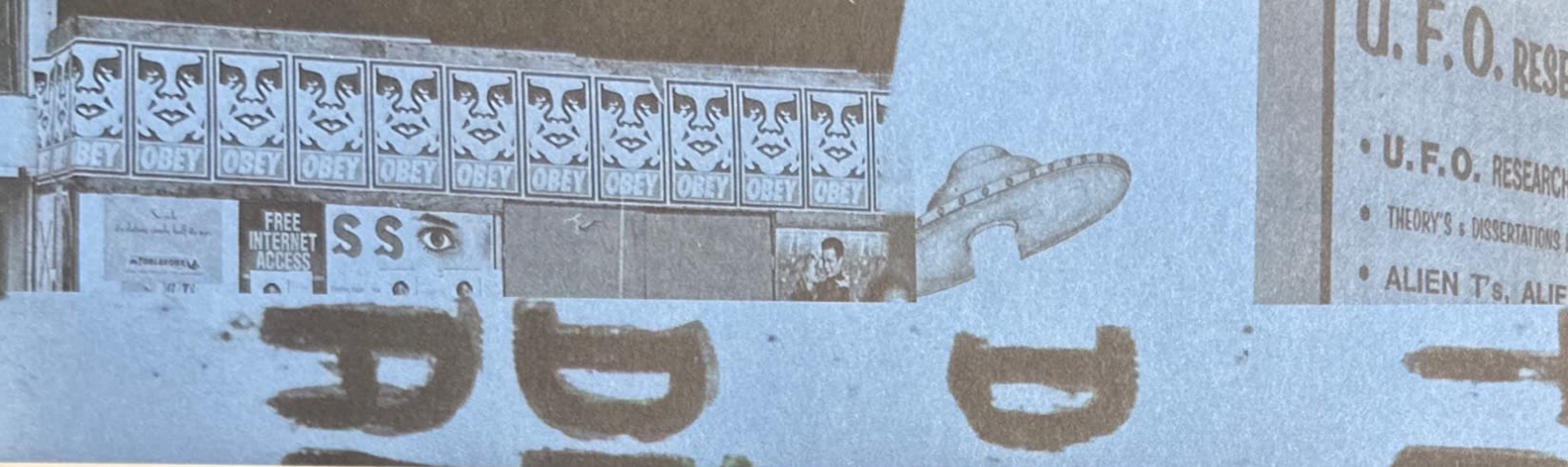




Loud paper

dedicated to increasing the volume of architectural discourse

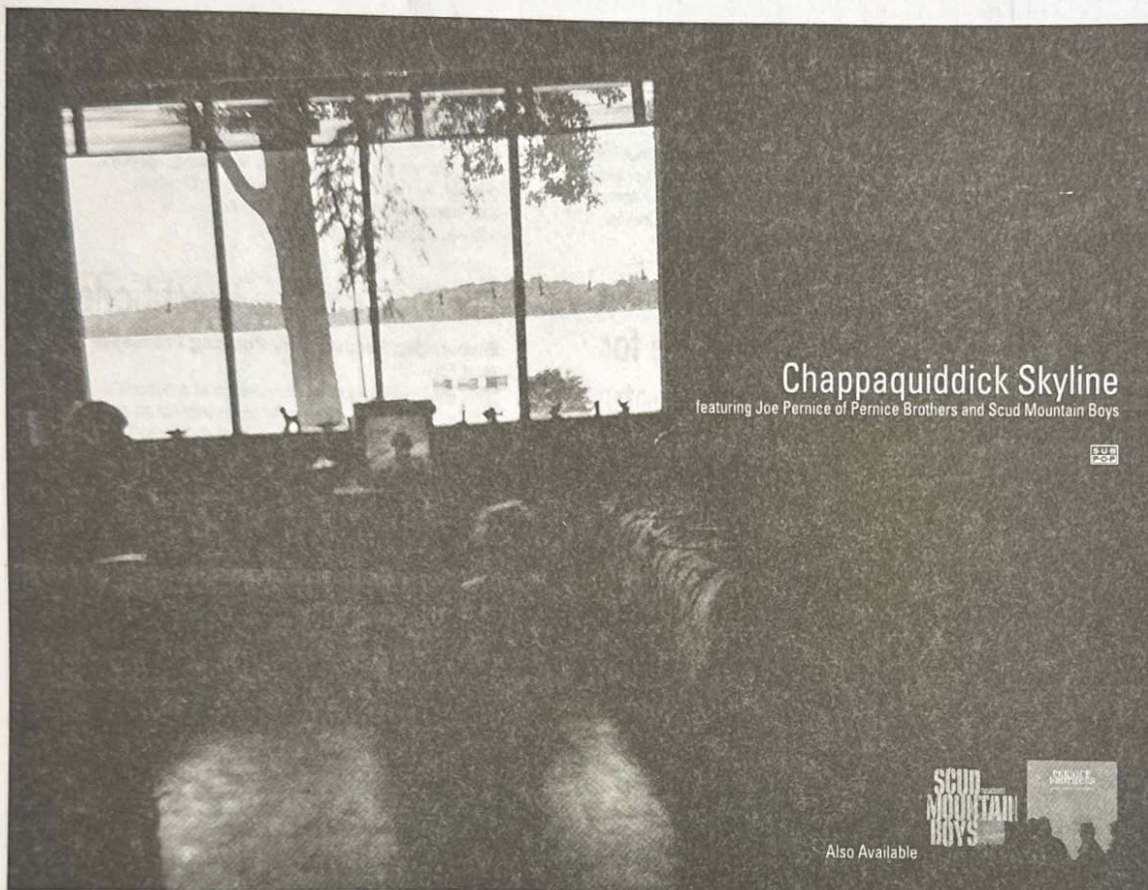
paranoia
volume 3, issue 3

\$3.95

ISSN 1523-8733



7 25274 95775 0

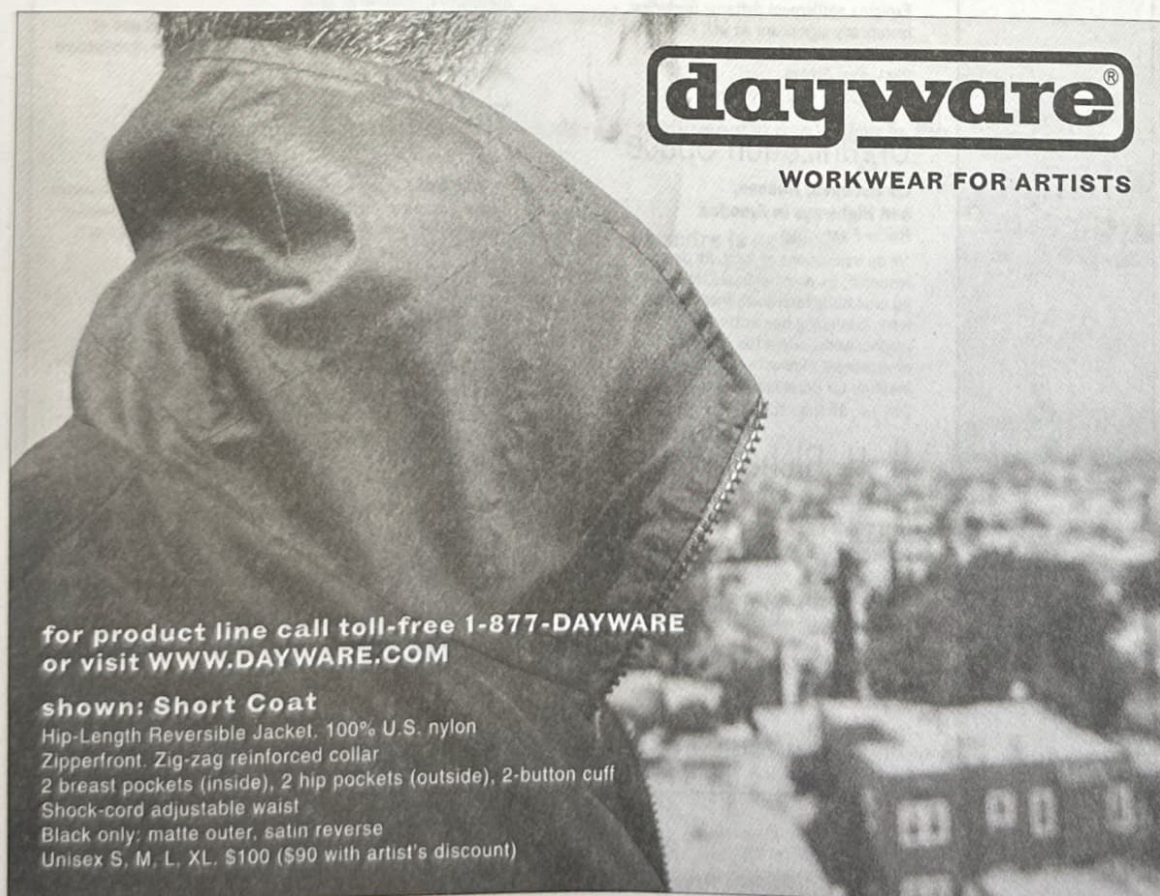


Chappaquiddick Skyline
featuring Joe Pernice of Pernice Brothers and Scud Mountain Boys

Also Available

SCUD MOUNTAIN BOYS

JOE PERNICE



dayware®
WORKWEAR FOR ARTISTS

for product line call toll-free 1-877-DAYWARE
or visit WWW.DAYWARE.COM

shown: Short Coat
Hip-Length Reversible Jacket. 100% U.S. nylon
Zipperfront. Zig-zag reinforced collar
2 breast pockets (inside), 2 hip pockets (outside), 2-button cuff
Shock-cord adjustable waist
Black only; matte outer, satin reverse
Unisex S, M, L, XL. \$100 (\$90 with artist's discount)



E-topia

"Urban Life, Jim—But Not As We Know It"

William J. Mitchell

"e-topia is an imaginative, solidly-grounded probe into the future of spaces and places for living and working." — Mitchell Kapor, Founder, Lotus Development Corporation
192 pp., \$22.50

Peter Behrens and a New Architecture for the Twentieth Century

Stanford Anderson

A long-awaited study of the great architect and designer Peter Behrens' contribution to the visual culture of the twentieth century.
393 pp., 251 illus., \$59.95

Anytime

edited by Cynthia Davidson

Architects, artists, and intellectuals address architecture's relationships to space and time in this latest addition to the series that began with *Anyone*.
288 pp., 180 illus., \$35 paper

Perspecta 30

The Yale Architectural Journal
"Settlement Patterns"

edited by Louise Harpman and Evan M. Supcoff

Explores settlement patterns (including historically significant as well as lesser-known modernist housing projects) in the United States.
120 pp., 146 illus., \$20 paper

Organization Space

Landscapes, Houses, and Highways in America
Keller Easterling

"In its innovations of form, its depth of research, its acute analysis, and its enormous relevance, this is a remarkable work. Easterling has written one of the most original works about the American environment I know." — Michael Sorkin, Institute for Urbanism, Vienna
224 pp., 37 illus., \$35

H. H. Richardson

The Architect, His Peers, and Their Era

edited by Maureen Meister

introduction by William H. Pierson, Jr.

The architect H. H. Richardson viewed not as an isolated genius but as an exemplary figure of his times.

Copublished with the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall Association
155 pp., 51 illus., \$20

Two-Way Mirror Power

Selected Writings by Dan Graham on His Art

Dan Graham

edited by Alexander Alberro

introduction by Jeff Wall

"Dan Graham's critical stance is refreshing, rigorous, original, and essential." — David Ross, Director, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
352 pp., 48 illus., \$29.95 paper

The Deliberative Practitioner

Encouraging Participatory Planning Processes
John Forester

"This book represents the culmination of a decade's work and succeeds. It will likely prove popular as a text in planning schools and appeal to professionals in a variety of allied disciplines." — Charles J. Hoch, University of Illinois at Chicago
381 pp., \$19.50 paper

The Historiography of Modern Architecture

Panayotis Tournikiotis

Draws from the literature of critical theory and philosophy as well as the history and theory of art and architecture to present a history of modern architecture.
400 pp., 34 illus., \$45

now in paperback

Pietro Belluschi

Modern American Architect

Meredith L. Clausen

"A well-crafted biography that sheds light on decades of American architectural practice." — *Progressive Architecture*
480 pp., 262 illus., 29 color, \$34.50 paper

The Situationist City

Simon Sadler

"It is a pleasure to see a work that situates the Situationists and our patience. For here at last are no less than three volumes of Rowe's papers, written since 1953. . . . Three volumes are not enough: I want more." — *Architectural Review*
248 pp., 117 illus., \$18.95 paper

As I Was Saying

Recollections and Miscellaneous Essays

Volume 1: Texas, Pre-Texas, Cambridge

Volume 2: Cornelliana

Volume 3: Urbanistics

Colin Rowe

edited by Alexander Caragone

"One imagines blood in the study. If so, it was worth his pain and our patience. For here at last are no less than three volumes of Rowe's papers, written since 1953. . . . Three volumes are not enough: I want more." — *Architectural Review*

Vol. 1: 216 pp., 26 illus., \$17.50 paper

Vol. 2: 392 pp., 203 illus., \$20 paper

Vol. 3: 376 pp., 135 illus., \$20 paper

Set: \$47.50 paper

<http://mitpress.mit.edu>

To order call 800-356-0343 (US & Canada) or (617) 625-8569. Prices higher outside U.S. and subject to change without notice.

The MIT Press

table of contents:

3	correspondence
6	hate house <i>James Harbison – Lackluster</i>
9	evidence <i>Mimi Zeiger</i>
12	urban paranoia <i>Alan Loomis – Offramp</i>
16	existence minimum/maximum <i>Jennifer Doublet</i>
24	ever forget: a story of monumental confusion in the eastern bloc <i>Elisabeth Dubin</i>
30	andre is everything and andre is nothing <i>Jeremy Xavier interviews Shepard Fairey</i> <i>photos by icki – Action! Photozine and Styazine</i>
38	paranoid chic <i>Eric Höweler</i>
42	looking out for you <i>Ninjalicious – Infiltration</i>
44	infiltration <i>Mary Walling Blackburn interviews Ninjalicious</i>
46	undanceable dance music <i>Sean Baca</i>
47	reviews

loud paper is a zine
dedicated to
increasing the
volume of
architectural
discourse. It is a
sambamgetoutthere
way of linking
architectural
thoughts, musings
and new work with
the culture at large.

loud paper is open
to all students,
architects,
educators, girls
about town, dear
Johns and critics
as a place for
writing loud about
architecture and
culture.

Submissions of
articles, projects,
book and music
reviews are
encouraged.

Editorial
Mimi Zeiger
Jeremy Xavier

More Editorial
Melinda Silva

Contributors
Sean Baca
Mary Walling Blackburn
Jennifer Doublet
Elisabeth Dubin
James Harbison
Eric Höweler
icki
Alan Loomis
Ninjalicious

Sponsors
Helene and Ronald Zeiger
Reva Lazarus
McCall Design Group

Supporters
Stacey Moss
Sima and Robert Zeiger

loud paper is available from:
Armadillo Trading Company
(213) 937-7674

Desert Moon Periodicals
(800) 547-0182 Fax: (505) 474-6317
jr@drmoon.com

Occulture Distributions (Canada)
(780) 434-9236

Ubiquity Distribution
(718) 875-5491

Contact loud paper at:
loudpaper@excite.com
or
loud paper c/o Mimi Zeiger
1521 LeRoy Avenue
Berkeley, California 94708
www.binginit.com/loudpaper

Advertisers:
We are taking ads for our next issue, June 2000.
Loud paper has reasonable ad rates and an ever-
growing circulation. Reach architects, artists and
designers nationwide.
For more information, email us at:
loudpaper@excite.com.

Subscriptions:
\$3.95 post paid for a sample issue.
\$15.00 post paid for four issues.
(Canada and international rates will vary)
Send cash or check made out to:
Mimi Zeiger c/o loud paper.
Buy loud paper online at www.insound.com.

Support loud paper:
Keep the volume of loud paper going, become a loud
paper sponsor. Your support helps keep discourse alive.
Email us at loudpaper@excite.com.

Thanks to:
Alan, Brendan, Bryan, Dad, Eames, Elisabeth, Eric,
Gita, icki, Israel, James, Jennifer, Joe, Laris, Lisa,
Melinda, Mickey, Michaeline, Mike, Mom, Nanny,
Ninjalicious, Robert, Shepard, Sean, Sima, Steve
and Tom.

Extra special hanks to:
Our web site designer, Samuel.
Check him out at www.binginit.com.

ISSN 1523-8733

I PASS THE ARCHITECT
get Archiflash®
3rd Edition



Over 1,100 Cards

- PRE-DESIGN
- SITE PLANNING REVIEW
- LATERAL FORCES
- GENERAL STRUCTURES
- MECHANICAL SYSTEMS
- MATERIALS & METHODS
- CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Prepare for the computerized Architect Registration Exam with Archiflash®. Each set contains over 1,100 expertly written flashcards covering all six multiple choice tests, plus a review section on Site Planning. Learning is easy with timesaving charts, essential definitions, concise diagrams, true-false and multiple choice Q & A. More info than you ever thought possible in an easy-to-use flashcard format.

COMPLETE SET ONLY \$89.95 Individual sections available for \$21.50 each + S&H.

1 800 411 7314 www.archiflash.com



correspondence:

loud paper welcomes your letters and postcards

Dear *loud paper*:

[I must be paranoid] What follows was originally intended as a eulogy, of sorts, for the Daphne Funeral Home. I think it mutated somewhere along the line(s)... attribute it to Matt Rowe's letter (*loud paper* 3/2) and some acculturation on the streets of the city.

There *is* no housing crisis. There is a crisis: of culture, of an unsustainable status quo. A crisis that our society adamantly denies – a healthy economy is the only indicator in which we invest our faith, and the Dow Jones has never looked better. Nevermind that we spend more money on fragrances than we do on homeless shelters, that investment in the advertising of candy outspends funding for education or that we still even use Styrofoam. Nevermind that engines run at twenty-five percent efficiency, natural resources are almost dry or that there are nearly 10,000 cars per square mile in San Francisco. We are constantly being seduced, image by image, sensually, willingly, in the corporate triumph of form over content. I think Guy Debord called it *spectacle*.

[Can you help me – occupy my brain?] If housing *is* the issue, the solution is nearby. Look in the Safeway parking lot. Build there. Why tear down the Daphne instead of a slab of asphalt? If housing *is* the issue, why will our building code demand that parking be provided? And has anyone asked what kind of model is Bridge apt to build – live-work similar to the Soma catastrophes: bloated, oversized and shoddy, but with T1 lines for high-speed connection? Or, more likely, similar to developer projects in Hayes Valley and Western Addition: programs based on design principles that have failed again and again.

Saddest yet is how disposable the building is. Does the *housing crisis* justify it? One of the few eloquent pieces of Architecture in the rather faceless city proper, can we take that

spirit and soul and relinquish it to a few pictures and experiences? There is a crisis, after all, people do need places to park and places to plug in their TV.
– James

[bracketed quotes from Black Sabbath's *Paranoid*]

Dear Editor:

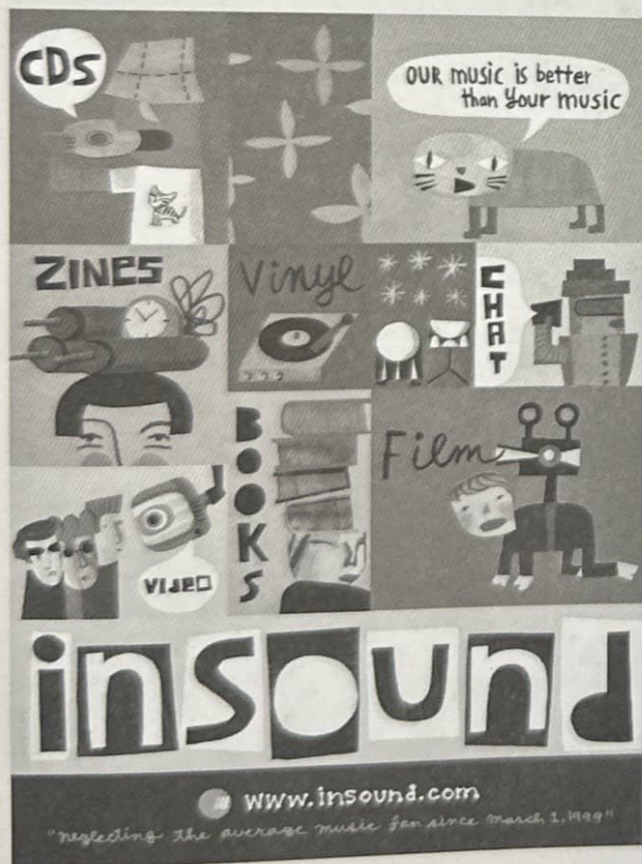
I only recently got turned on to your publication by a friend of mine. I was reading Volume 3, Issue 2 and had just finished the text accompanying the House of Mona Lisa project when I turned to the high school yearbook photographs that were supposed to portray the *monalisaness* of the iconographic visual experience that is framed in the core of the house. It was no stretch to see that these photographs were in fact from New Trier West High School yearbook, Northfield, Illinois, 1973. I had perused the article once before, but when I saw Ruth Heilzinger's likeness and Sarah Lotter and Nina Lundquist and others I was startled by the remembrance of them as part of Pool Guard, math class or Homecoming Float and similar high school experiences from twenty-six years ago.

What is the connection between Jason Griffiths and these photographs? It gave me an eerie kind of connection to your publication and to the piece. Does my experience and familiarity with and random recognition of these images alter my perception of the piece? Is that experience further enhanced by my familiarity with the proposed site for the house in question?

In 1982 I visited the Louvre while I was in Paris laying over prior to journeying to Dubai for the then booming petroleum business. I was wearing a beautifully cut midnight blue wool gabardine suit and made to measure cotton shirt with cufflinks and a subdued dark pattern tie and was standing perhaps twenty feet away from *Mona Lisa*. An elderly woman approached me and asked in English where the *Mona Lisa* was located. I turned to my right and gestured to the knot of people that were obscuring the painting itself and told her that the painting was just past them. She was astonished that I spoke English. I replied that she had asked me in English but also assured her that I was also an American. This too seemed to surprise her.

Thus in my ongoing travels I seem to find familiar reminders and fragments of my past. They reassemble into written observations such as this.

Best regards,
Jeff Luney



ATOMIC
TERRORISTS
STOP
DUMPING
DEAD
DISEASED
RATS IN THIS
HOUSE

photos by james harbor

HATE HOUSE



Sometimes the use of a house is so extraordinary that this use transforms an otherwise ordinary building.

BACK IN THE 70s, the Sudanese Liberation Army used their San Francisco, South of Market apartment¹ to play Marxist-Hippie-terrorist war games – i.e. maneuvers through the kitchen, push-ups in the living room, and reactionary, re-education sessions in the closets.

Sometimes the use of a house is so extraordinary that this use transforms an otherwise ordinary building. I was flabbergasted by such a house in Oakland. I interviewed the neighbors and learned the house is owned by a Ms. Williams, to whom I wrote and suggested perhaps the possibility that we could meet and talk about her house.

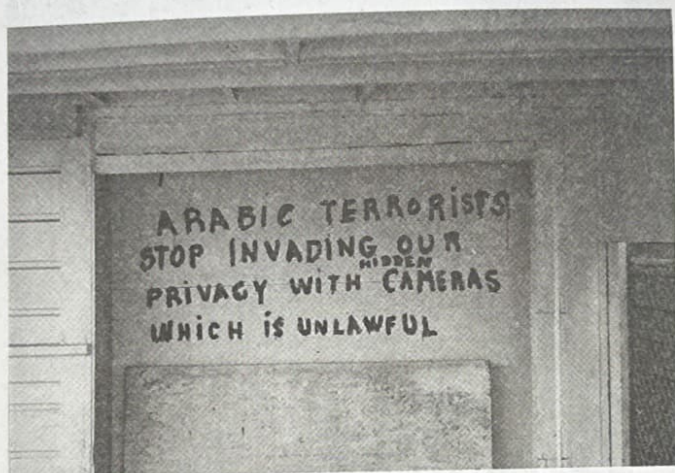
Ms. Williams has employed the entire façade of her house as a forum for free speech. In black paint, she has lettered strange, vicious diatribes all singularly directed at her next-door neighbors: Arabs who run a typical convenience store, and who sell liquor, beer, pork rinds and other stuff that they would never themselves consume. Ms. Williams' verse is paranoid and extreme. "Animalistic, Diabolic, Demonic, Arabic Terrorists Stop Dumping Dead, Diseased Rats in this House." "Arabic Terrorists Stop Invading Our Privacy with Hidden Cameras which is Unlawful." "Arabic Terrorists You Do Not Own Me. I Do Not Belong To You. We Were Emancipated From Slavery on 1-1-1863."

Ms. Williams answered my letter with a telephone call. She said she would think about my proposal to meet and my offer to write about her house and her "problem with the neighbors." She said she would need to consult with the elders of her church before granting an interview, a rule I secretly imagined imposed on Ms.

Williams by well meaning members of her community who eagerly sought to protect her from ridicule from unscrupulous journalists. I gave up any real hope of being granted a "Ms. Williams and her House of Hate" exclusive but a few weeks later paid her a visit.

She is polite, courteous and completely psychotic. This young, fifty-year-old grandmother invited me, a white guy, into her house. I was thinking/hoping merely that we might talk on her porch, but I appreciated the invitation. The inside was neat and Spartanly furnished. She apologized for not vacuuming before my unannounced visit. "I couldn't vacuum" she said, "It's those Arabs. They stole my vacuum cleaner." Later she told me they (the Arabs) were successful in a daring, nighttime burglary of her grandchild's sneakers. The convenience and usefulness of such a bogey man or bogey population was not lost to me. I wondered if I could blame my lack of a reasonable, well-paying job on the Arabs. Maybe they were the cause for my failure to do my laundry so far this month.

Ms. Williams' scapegoating vision is a bizarre hybrid of jingoistic, State Depart-



ment propaganda – the sort of typical “Saddam Hussein is a modern day Hitler” – and the legitimate concerns, underrepresented in the mass media, of certain members of African-American communities who are distressed that their neighborhoods are thoroughly pockmarked with liquor stores. Careful study of the Rodney King riots (claims Mike Davis in his piece “LA was Just the Beginning: Urban Revolt in the United States”) reveals that the riots were more of an ordered, orchestrated campaign waged largely against Korean-owned corner stores, than *mêlée*.

Are the war-pigs, William Jefferson Clinton or George Bush, culpable for Ms. Williams’ fear of her neighbors? Is her hate a by-product of the Gulf War? Or is the banking industry that has traditionally refused to offer business loans to African-Americans wishing to enterprise out of America’s urban blight responsible? “She’s just crazy,” offered the man working at the convenience store, “and I’m not Arab anyway. I am from Palestine!” He assured me that being from Palestine was different from being “Arabian.” “The guy who owned the store before me, now he was an Arab.”

Another, a black woman about Ms. Williams age, related a popular neighborhood myth, dismissing it as she told it. “Some people say she [Ms. Williams] was in love with the original Arab owner, but he spurned her affection. So she is a vengeful woman, but I do not believe that she was ever in love, just crazy.” True or not, I liked this theory. It gave some tragic elegance to this otherwise irrational, sordid use of a façade.

America is hardly some melting pot. America is more like a mixed salad, racially diverse but racially separate. Here I was a white man in a black woman’s house chatting about Arabs and I considered it an adventure.

Ms. Williams graciously yet firmly parried my eventual request for an interview. She replied that she did not wish to be interviewed by me. She said it, *loud paper*, was too small. She had called the FBI and written to the *Chronicle*. Ms. Williams had called for the big guns. While interviewless, I had a new friend of sorts and a slice of real life irony, richer than any I could have constructed fictionally: the name of the liquor store run by the Arabs, the “United Market.”



1. The Sudanese Liberation Army had use of several apartments in Oakland and San Francisco which they referred to as “safehouses” though “smelly commune” might be more appropriate. Their South of Market flat, the one where they “held” Patty Hearst is now above a restaurant on Folsom called Julies Supper Club across the street now from, surprise-surprise, a coffee shop/Laundromat named BrainWashed.



Unabomber Cabin, Exhibit A, 1998

Unabomber Cabin, Exhibit B, 1998

by Richard Barnes

photo courtesy of Henry Urbach Architecture

evidence

THE NEWS COVERAGE surrounding the turn of the century is only now slowly halting. The seven bulletins issued by the United States Government warning Americans of their vulnerability to terrorist attack both at home and abroad seem like distant words spoken too quickly, even as Spain, India and Pakistan deal with bomb attacks. U.S. citizens peek sheepishly out from their Costco hoards of bottled water and Spaghetti-O's, relieved and somewhat disappointed that very little went wrong.

What about those souls who were plotting the end of the world – the Pat Bells and Chicken Littles, the ones who were gleefully predicting Judgment Day in all its brimstone glory? The FBI is wrapping up the indictments: cataloging the hate literature, the carpet fibers and sending the ammonium nitrate to a secure location. The 11 o'clock headlines, which documented the *fin-de-sicle*, are just fleeting snippets of video; but the footage was uncanny in its ability to capture both a national paranoia and a paranoid architecture.

In the case of Ahmed Ressam, the Algerian man that was charged with trying to smuggle explosives and timing devices across the U.S./Canadian border, the forensic greediness of the media exposed his abandoned Montreal apartment to millions of viewers like you. The camera caressed the details of this paranoid space – paranoid not solely because of Ressam's supposed political affiliations, but because of the nation's paranoid fight against the hastily approaching doom of Y2K. The small rooms, the unremarkable beige carpet, the standard-issue sliding closet doors ajar and, oddly, a bit skewed off their runners and the discolored paint are all mute, but each is apparently guilt-ridden – charged by massive media coverage and the exposure of place.

The tension of private space displayed, or more often, forcefully laid bare to the public, causes uneasiness. A *New York Times* article from December 31, 1999 chronicles a police raid on a quite Pakistani enclave in Brooklyn. The police were looking for associates of Ressam, looking to stamp out terrorism on their beat. The tale of the dominant intrusion read in the *Times* as follows: "[the police] made their way down side streets toward their target, a three-story building at the corner of Newkirk and Coney Island Avenues, and then raced inside – some through the main entry and others up a fire escape – until they were crowded into a narrow second-floor hallway outside apartment No. 1. Smashing the door open, they burst inside screaming."

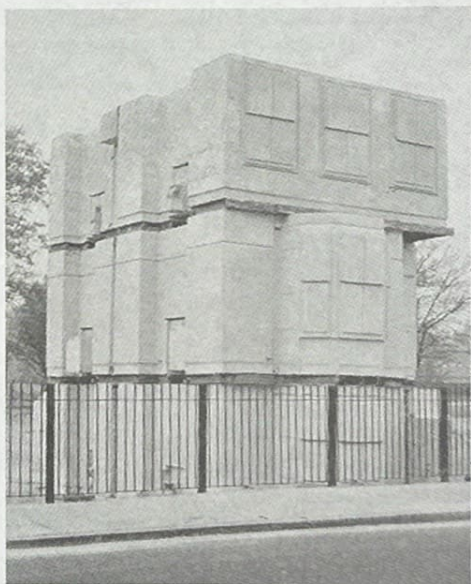
The transformation of cheap and flimsy apartments, spaces of impermanence and shiftiness, into media buzz is a semblance of another domicile worthy of hours of analysis on CNBC – the Unabomber Cabin. The cabin, iconic with its peaked roof, single door and clapboard siding absorbed prime-time attention and spectacle. The simple shape pulsed the nightly rhythm of Theodore Kaczynski's paranoid attacks with the same force as the manual typewriter keys that spelled out his manifesto. FBI teams uncovered bomb-making materiel, assorted incriminating papers, the typewriter and the manifesto. Yet the largest piece of evidence against the man who would be Unabomber was the cabin, container for all his assorted ravings.

Unabomber Cabin, 1998
by Richard Barnes

photo courtesy of
Henry Urbach Architecture



House, 1993
by Rachael Whiteread



Richard Barnes photographed the Unabomber cabin for an edition of the *New York Times Magazine*. The ominous photographs ran on a breezy Sunday in May 1998. The collection of images, subsequently expanded, was the inaugural exhibition at Henry Urbach architecture in New York City, January 1999.

Barnes' large-format images are forensic. They are as much about detail – the obsessive order of the roof nails as they are about the cabin as an object. Several of the photographs document the building façades. Each side is shot against a black background. Barnes plays with the ambiguity of scale. Stripped of context, the cabin, at once a dark and sinister chalice, transforms into a toy and, ironically, resembles the shape of a child's drawing of a house. One half-expects a crayon loop of smoke to escape from a clumsily drawn chimney.

It is a haunted house. "Drawn in brown ink and wash, this small, two-story stone cottage seemed to have little out of the ordinary about it. With its four windows, walled up on the ground floor, its single door, pitched roof and chimney, it seems no more than the archetypical 'child's house,' a commonplace compilation of the fundamental elements of dwelling.... Nevertheless, it has the reputation of being haunted, and despite its simplicity, 'its aspect was strange.'" writes Anthony Vidler in his chapter entitled "Unhomely Houses," in the *Architecture of the Uncanny*. He describes a "dead house" drawn by Victor Hugo redolent of the same qualities as Kaczynski's abode.

When I spoke to Mr. Barnes, asking after what drew him to the Unabomber cabin, he replied, "I am interested in the cabin as evidence – evidence is transportable. The Unabomber cabin is a personal home transported across the country." It is a home haunted by media and governmental examination of personal space. Although Barnes was not authorized to photograph the interior of the cabin, he was escorted to the Sacramento warehouse where FBI personnel stored the cabin, the exterior vibrates with the knowledge of what lays inside. The sheaves of incriminating papers containing the victim's addresses, bomb-making diagrams and mock-ups, were so expertly reported by the nightly news that they are projected by the viewing public back onto the structure and they flicker across the façade. Barnes believes that the cabin is "a contemporary artifact." He says, "the way the cabin is photographed is representative of the paranoia – representative of our time."

Vidler, towards the end of *The Architecture of the Uncanny*, following both Jacques Laçan and Victor Burgin, investigates what Burgin calls "Paranoiac Space." Without going through the psychological and philosophical machinations required by these authors, let's say that such a space is a condition of surface, "...that which is staged though anxiety instigated at its surface." (Vidler) It is where the exterior surface simultaneously represents the interior and the exterior. Like the façades of the Unabomber cabin, it is a space that is blurred (Vidler's word) but is also taut with the tension of what is inside and what is represented on the outside. It is a tension between enclosed space and object.

While the foreboding relationship between the exterior and interior of Kaczynski's cabin becomes paranoiac in the obsessively functionalist details so expertly captured by Barnes, there is another artwork which revels in surface tension – Rachael Whiteread's 1993 piece, *House*. The sculpture which caused considerable controversy at the time it won the Turner Prize and was subsequently destroyed, is a casting of the interior walls of a London row house. The blown-in concrete, which was used for the casting, shows dusty corners, filigree traces of velvet wallpaper and mantelpiece cornices on its skin. It created evidence of private lives.

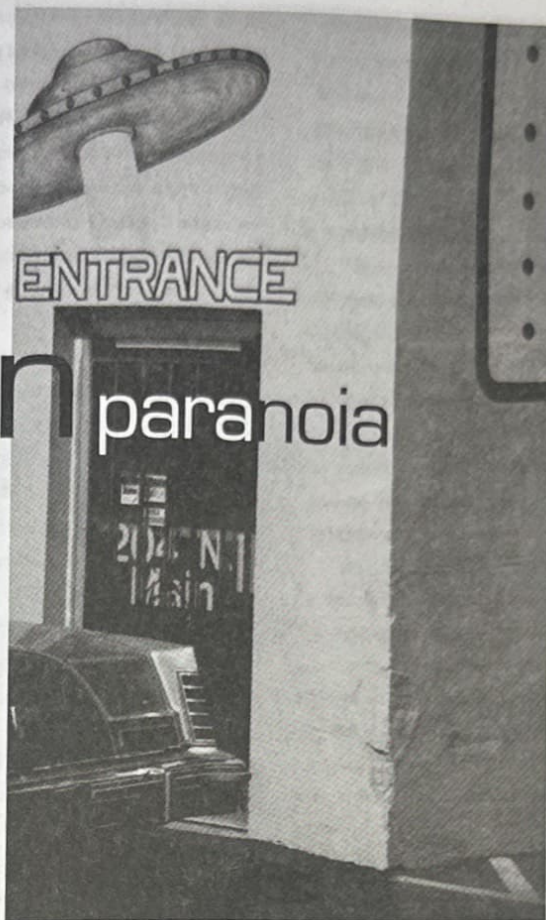
The dense form, 193, the last house in a series of pre-war homes on Grove Road stirred lust in the hearts of art critics and ire in those of local residents and right wing newspaper editors. Politics of place swirled around the artwork. The East End, where the project was located, is a catalytic zone. As Doreen Massey writes in her essay "Space-time and the Politics of Location" which is part of the Artangle collection *House*, by Rachel Whiteread, "A reference to 'tradition' in the East End can bring to mind radicalism and ethnic diversity or racism and community closure." The artwork created outrage. The paranoid events that surrounded *House* aggravated both by the elite snobbery of art critics and political context of the East End were played out on the surface of the piece.

Written charges illustrated the concrete surface once faced with painted plaster, not spray paint. Much like the paranoiac whose deepest fears and secrets are revealed by the hint of perspiration on his face. One façade read "HOUSES FOR ALL BLACK + WHITE." The scrawled letters clashed with the negative space of where stairs and windows used to be. Journals and newspapers added piece after piece to the controversy. With resounding force the words of both sides hit the sculpture, until ultimately the surface tension was too great and *House* was destroyed in 1994.

House is both an object and is a paranoiac space. The Victorian detail cast in its surface traces in death mask certitude the evidence of an interior existence publicly exposed. Strangely representing the domesticity of another *fin-de-sicile*, *House*, by both surface and spectacle, resembles both the media scrutinized interiors of suspected terrorist apartments or the charged exterior of the Unabomber cabin.

It is the element of public or media examination that creates a twist on Vidler's discussion of paranoiac space. While his definition is concerned with the relationship of individual psyche to surface, what is shown in these three structures is a social paranoia communicated by national news outlets. A paranoiac consensus projects its beliefs onto the buildings that come into its view, animating the exterior surfaces, fetishizing the architecture of close interior detail. It is architecture evidenced in video, film and ink. ☉

urban paranoia



Entrance to the International UFO Museum and Research Center

photos by alan loomis



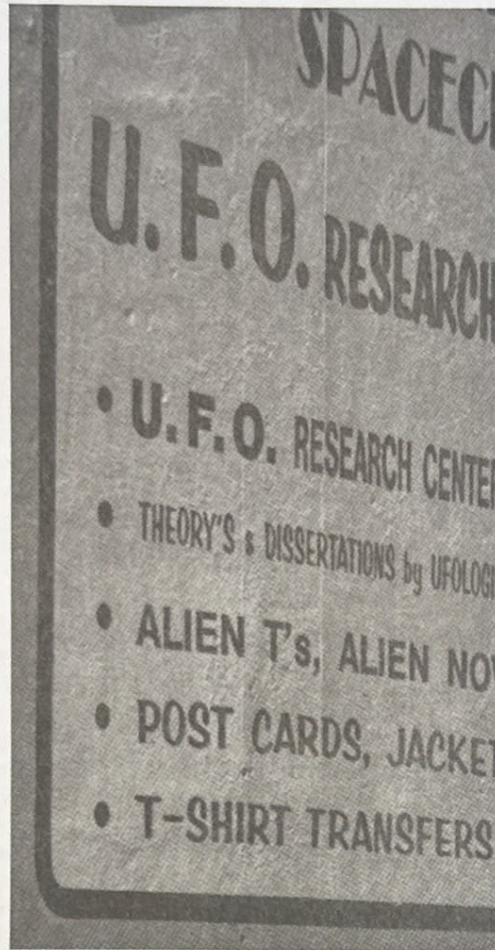
LOCATED at the foothills of the New Mexican Rocky Mountains, Roswell geologically belongs more to the west Texan plains than to its native state. Consequently it shares the same flat, boring, sprawling characteristics of any ranch town on the Great Plains. Roswell could be Optimo City, as described by J.B. Jackson in *The Almost Perfect Town*. Like Optimo City and the rest of the Plains, the plan of Roswell is a geometrically inflexible gridiron. From Thomas Jefferson through Frank Lloyd Wright, American tradition has endowed the open and non-hierarchical pattern of the grid with

political significance. Occupying one block in downtown Roswell, the county courthouse charges the grid with additional civic accessibility and importance. Jackson observes that the courthouse square symbolizes the local representative government, not the royalty or religion that centers and binds other nations. Both America's political and urban structures, whose origins can be traced through white European colonists to the Greek agora of Athenian democracy, are thus summarized by the combination of Roswell's grid and courthouse.

With typical American pragmatism, this combination provides Roswell its one gesture towards monumentality; an urban tradition unique to New Mexico, "H" shaped electrical utility poles bridge a nearby alley and visually frame the courthouse dome in a series of arches. This moment of urban scenography aside, there is virtually no reason to visit Roswell.

Yet aliens allegedly visited Roswell. According to the now well-established mythology, a UFO crashed there during a 1948 thunderstorm. Or was it two spacecrafts? Or perhaps just one that crashed twice, skipping across New Mexican ranches? The stories differ. Like any good myth there is no evidence only faith. Roswell's apostles claim that the military (executed by proverbial men in black?) quickly recovered the UFO and its alien bodies in an action concealed by an equally efficient program of disinformation and secrecy. The Air Force, meanwhile, claims this was nothing more than the retrieval of surveillance balloons and wooden dummies dropped to test parachutes. One of these dummies is at the International UFO Museum and Research Center. The clearinghouse for Roswell's different stories, the IUFOMRC displays artifacts, newspaper articles, sworn affidavits, videotaped interviews and local artwork: a collection of material that fails to add up to a coherent narrative but is saturated with suspicion. The truth of Roswell, if it's out there, exists somewhere

Sign detail at IUFOMRC



in these fragmented accounts and the government's various *official* explanations.

I also visited Roswell. I crossed the mountains from the Tularosa Basin to the west, following a two-day visit to White Sands National Park and Alamogordo. The National Park is located within the boundaries of "Trinity Site" the White Sands Missile Range famous as ground zero of the first atomic explosion, famous for secret rocket tests conducted by ex-patriate Nazi scientists, famous for Star Wars testing. The floor of the Tularosa Basin is littered with the white radar domes and mysterious laboratories of secret research. Overhead, the distinctive black triangle profile of F-117 fighters can occasionally be seen. The pricey Stealth fighters are housed on Holloman Air Force Base in Alamogordo. The Basin is a haven to secret weapons and secret planes. Roswell was once also home to both secret weapons and secret planes. At the time of the mythical UFO crash, the large airfield south of the city, today the terminal location for obsolete jumbo jets, was the origin point for the only Army Air Force unit with the Bomb. In 1948, this corner of New Mexico was the epicenter of America's atomic power, a convergence of energy that attracted aliens in their UFOs, if one believes the Roswell mythology. Thus the arrival, crash and secret recovery of UFOs is implicated in the secrecy of other military black projects.

Paradoxically, this secrecy has made Roswell famous and now supports a healthy tourist industry. Two doors from the UFO Museum, the "Alien Zone" sells T-Shirts, stuffed little green men, toy flying saucers, books and videos. For an extra two dollars one can purchase access to "Area 51," a collection of dioramas depicting aliens drinking at a bar, skiing in Tahoe and other middle class activities. Another tourist shop advertises "Indian Jewelry, Mexican Imports, Alien Gifts," commodifying and aligning indigenous and immigrant populations with extraterrestrials. The 1997 movie *Men In Black* also makes this correlation, confusing illegal immigrants and the INS with extraterrestrials and the MIB's. As the advertisement and movie obviously suggest, paranoia and suspicion about the secret infiltration of aliens into American culture veils anxieties about illegal immigration from the South and other rapidly changing demographic patterns. Like other cities, Roswell's political and urban form is inhabited by a diversity of people and ethnicities, whose ideals of community, democracy and justice may differ from America's Founding Fathers and their Anglo-Saxon children. For some, the government's alleged concealment of the Roswell UFO crash represents its failure to contain this cultural heterogeneity, and, for others, its failure to embrace it. Roswell suggests that the government might in other ways be undermining the social and political basis of democracy. Might we be living in an alien-nation?

Roswell is therefore the unlikely focus for a culture of paranoia. It is the subject of a new television series on the Warner Brothers network, the hidden prehistory of Independence Day, and a continuing metaphor for the dark conspiracies of *The X-Files*. As portrayed by pop culture, Roswell is symbolic of a deep distrust of the government's and its ability to foster citizenship. The dissolution of the common society necessary for democracy begins in this small, unassuming New Mexican town.

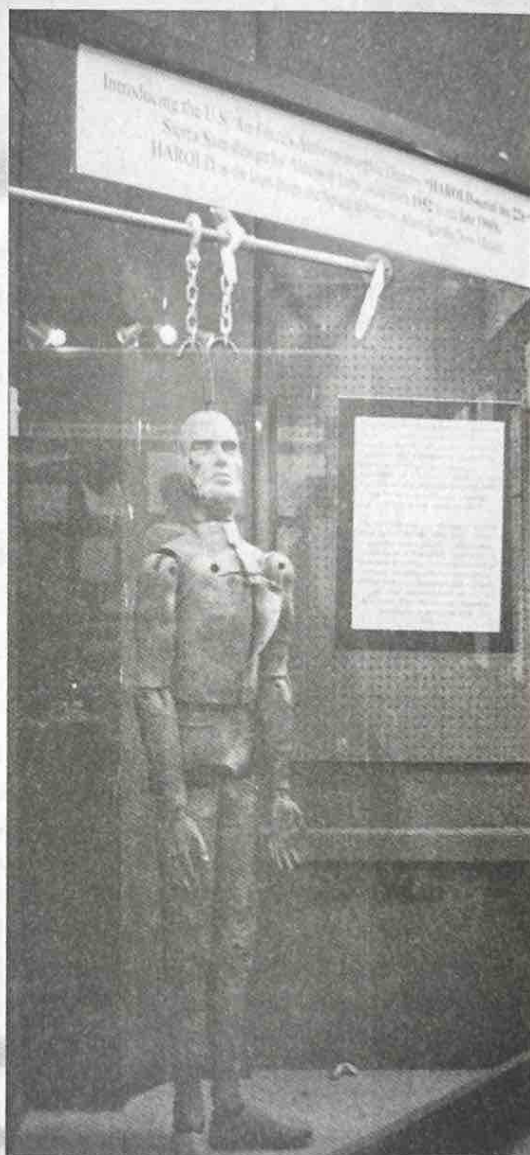
In the seeming vacuum of governmental forthrightness, alternative and sometimes extreme societies emerge, adopting their own social codes and insulating themselves from the external world. Believing that they were already aliens in this nation, the thirty-nine members of the Heaven's Gate group committed suicide to join a spacecraft trailing a passing comet. Not surprisingly, the cult was located in Southern California, the usual representative apotheosis of American society and government's Balkanization and fracturing. Here is the largest concentration of homeowner's and neighborhood associations, many of them located in the "master planned communities" on the fringes and edges of greater Los Angeles. These associations are an alternative and subtle, but not participatory or optional, form of government. Property deeds in planned communities contain the association's right to levee taxes and penalize violators of its "codes, covenants and restrictions." These regulations maintain an external homogeneity of architectural style through new forms of exclusionary zoning and internal class homogeneity. The urban form of these neighborhoods reinforces this exclusion; cul-de-sacs with feeder roads and gated entries are the norm. Unlike the grid of Roswell, the hierarchical structure of master planned communities' roadway system eliminates choice of movement. This closed urbanism facilitates policed borders whose limited access points are under constant surveillance.

To enter the neighborhood "Arcadia Falls," a resident code is required by the front gate computer. This mechanism greets you by name and presumably keeps a database of your movements. Not surprisingly, during *The X-Files* first season of filming in Los Angeles the episode "Arcadia" (aired on 03/07/99) took place in this fictional planned community, which could be anywhere in the LA/San Diego metroplex. To investigate the mysterious disappearances of various community residents, FBI special agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully pose as a married couple and purchase a home in Arcadia Falls. As their new neighbors frantically help them unload the delivery truck by the five PM deadline, Mulder and Scully realize that the residents are overly preoccupied with the community's regulations. Much to his neighbors' consternation, Mulder tests the consequences of violating the rules, first by installing a basketball hoop, then by clubbing his mailbox. He also installs a tacky pink lawn flamingo in the front yard. It is a moment brilliantly photographed in lighting reminiscent of heroic posters of the socialist movement, conjuring up, and satirizing, images of the American man heroically presiding over his well-tended and chemically controlled lawn.

Just as the previous violations are mysteriously rectified, the flamingo disappears. While in open neighborhoods tending the front lawn is a civic act of participation in the national landscape of suburbia and therefore open to personal expression, in a planned community it is a legal responsibility subject to homogeneous aesthetic regulations. Thus when Mulder begins excavating the front yard his neighbors are quick to state that swimming pools are strictly forbidden, objections Mulder only partially deflects by stating that reflecting pools are not mentioned in the six-inch binder of regulations. But he is not digging for water, but for bodies.

As Mulder and Scully continue their investigation, they discover that Arcadia Falls is built upon a garbage dump. The insular and gated community of *The X-Files* is constructed on society's trash and detritus, metaphorically illustrating that rejecting the social disorder that garbage represents produces the self-righteous perfection of planned communities. Appropriately continuing this metaphor, the garbage in *The X-Files* also enforces the community's restrictions that are willed to life by the neighborhood association president. Like the previous residents of Mulder and Scully's house, he becomes a victim of his own creation. Clearly violating the aesthetic restrictions of lawn ornamentation, he meets his end when handcuffed to a mailbox.

Despite retreating and literally closing themselves from public life, even restricted neighborhoods are contaminated by mistrust and suspicion. The paranoia that produces "master planned communities" turns inward. The rural simplicity and contentment promised by Arcadia is not possible. Community can not be master planned and regulated; for even in Roswell, it is the product of political consensus and participation. If America's democratic project is to avoid the meritocracy of competing interest groups, we must instead face outward and expand our political and urban boundaries to include those we have neglectfully and willfully excluded.



Air Force dummy at IUFOMRC

EXISTENCE MINIMUM / MAXIMUM

OR DWELLING IN THE PRESENCE OF FLIES,
MAGGOTS AND MURDER

jennifer doublet

left 1, up 2, right 3

WE'LL START WITH THE FLIES. In 1927, as the only female designer on Ernst May's team for the *Neue Frankfurt* housing developments, Grete Schutte-Lihotzky created what came to be known as the Frankfurt Kitchen. A tightly framed workroom, it was a place of optimal efficiency and order. Nary was there a chance for a hair out of place or any flies in the soup. In her article, *A Revolution in the Woman's Sphere: Grete Lihotzky and the Frankfurt Kitchen*, Susan R. Henderson describes the kitchen finish materials. She wrote, "The Linoleum work surfaces, the stove top and tile floor were black, and the enameled cabinet fronts were a deep blue, a color that Lihotzky understood repelled flies."

Whether or not the colored surface actually repelled flies is debatable. However, the intent, the act and the desire to sanitize and restrain all extraneous activity from taking place is clear. This kitchen, at the forefront of the modernist-minimalist frontier strove with a singular purpose to domesticate Taylorism, right down to the elimination of dipterous insects. (It should be noted that dipterous insects, of which the common house fly is one, are in part defined by their larvae which feed on decaying matter such as flesh and rotting food.)

When the artist Candy Jernigan opened her Cape Breton, Nova Scotia summer cottage one year, she found it overrun with bug carcasses. Rather than

purge them in a fit of hygienic hysteria, she gathered them up and set out to draw their tiny corpses. One by one these anonymous death portraits are replete with the attentive detail of amateur natural history studies or carefully pressed flowers. Originally published in *The Dead Bug Book*, the images are now arranged in a deck: dead bugs grace the surfaces of clean little white cards packaged in a tight wood box.

Domestic obsessions in the form of modernist organizational systems or Victorian classification carryovers provide equally fertile and surprisingly related grounds for investigating our relationships to life, death and dwelling. *Fin-de-siecle* mannerists of all sorts continue in the spirit of these traditions and rise to the occasion with projects that range wide in scope and ambition. Both Joel Sanders' "Five Minute Bathroom," entitled "Ablution Control," in *Wallpaper* October 1999 and any undertaking in Martha Stewart's *Living*, inhabit similarly extreme edges of domesticity. These projects refine, define and potentially confine sensory experience to and by task. They relish the long-standing seduction of containment, classification and cleanliness of modern man's seemingly eternal search for control and efficiency on the home front.

While architects imagine lives in surfaces and space, criminal medical examiners reconstruct lives from the final chalk trace of existence. Design for



photos by corinne botz
images from the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death

living and documenting the dead make coincident bedfellows because both share a fervor for gathering, noting, photographing and cataloging bits of human activity. In Baltimore there is not only the coming and going of bodies from street to morgue at the Chief Medical Examiner's Office, but there is also a fixed collection of mixed-media miniature dioramas depicting nineteen scenes of unexplained death.

Meant as study models, these dollhouses articulate the particulars of individual death scenes in order to provide training in typological case interpretations for investigators. As such, the scenes both refute and reinforce the power of domestic order. Mayhem found in the tableau reveals the banal vulnerability of supposedly secured worlds while their fine detail sparks our faith in forensic truth.

Known as the "Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death," the dollhouses were built by Mrs. Frances Giessner Lee in the 1940's. They were a critical part of her crusade to establish sound criminal investigation skills for police officers and medical examiners. A woman with more than the proverbial "room of her own," she endowed Harvard University with \$500,000 to found the nation's first Department of Legal Medicine and actively participated in the Harvard Association of Police Science. Her wealth, position and keen criminal mind fueled her determination and interest; at the same time her unusual talent

for model building guided the execution of these havoc ridden sites.

Mrs. Lee's vignettes are derived from a range of actual case histories. Murder, accident or suicide scenes are palpably identifiable. They are detail laden and atmospherically intact realities of particular characters and situations. Disguised just enough to be untraceable to specific crimes in their own time, they eerily replicate any number of exposés in today's daily news media and docudramas. As such, the houses sit squarely in line with the history of investigation and the darker side of urban observation and speculation. The existence of the flâneur/voyeur/connoisseur is threaded in and out of each marvelously fetishistic scene via the stories they evoke, the participation they solicit and the materiality they harbor.

While the real-life stories of the dollhouses link them to Edgar Allen Poe's precursor to the modern detective novel, *The Murder of Marie Roget* (inspired by the murder of Mary Rogers), the detail of each scene links them to the atmospheric poetry of Charles Baudelaire. The models are custom made for comparison with Bataille's essay "X Marks the Spot" in *Documents* 2, Number 7, a discussion of forensic photographs of Chicago's gangland murder victims. Lastly, their uncanny, callous criminality touch on themes similar to Benjamin's essays on photography, the city and the ever-present potential for crime.



But perhaps they are closer to the hermetically-sealed paranoia of the female agoraphobic rather than the misogynist flâneur. While the domestic setting bared public though criminality might list these houses as among an agoraphobic's worst nightmare – however warped the logic may be – their complete self-containment registers them as secure worlds. Thus, outside is bad and inside is good. Whether the murderer is friend or foe, stranger or lover, the structure of the carefully placed, physical interior relationships built into the dollhouses promises vindication if not salvation through identification.

Like any popular mystery novel, the premise of these studies is that the clues can be traced, the crime can be found out, made safe, contained. As it happens, Mrs. Lee was home schooled and denied a college education by virtue of her family's attitudes toward women in society. With something as seemingly innocuous and traditionally feminine as dollhouses she advanced in a male-dominated field.

5



In case #13 from the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death, criminal investigators attending training seminars in Baltimore are presented with the following scenario for the Parsonage Parlor.

*REPORTED TO NUTSHELL LABORATORIES, FRIDAY AUGUST 23, 1946:
Dorothy Dennison, High School student dead. Mrs. James Dennison, mother
questioned Police Lieutenant Robert Peale reporting.*

Mrs. Dennison's statement:

On Monday morning, August 19, 1946, about eleven o'clock, Dorothy had walked down town to buy some hamburger steak for dinner. She didn't have much money in her purse. When she failed to return in time for dinner, her mother telephoned a neighbor who stated that she had seen the girl walking toward the market but had not seen her since. Mrs. Dennison also telephoned the market and the proprietor said he had sold Dorothy a pound of hamburger some time before noon but didn't notice which way she turned upon leaving his shop. By late afternoon, Mrs. Dennison, thoroughly alarmed, notified the police.

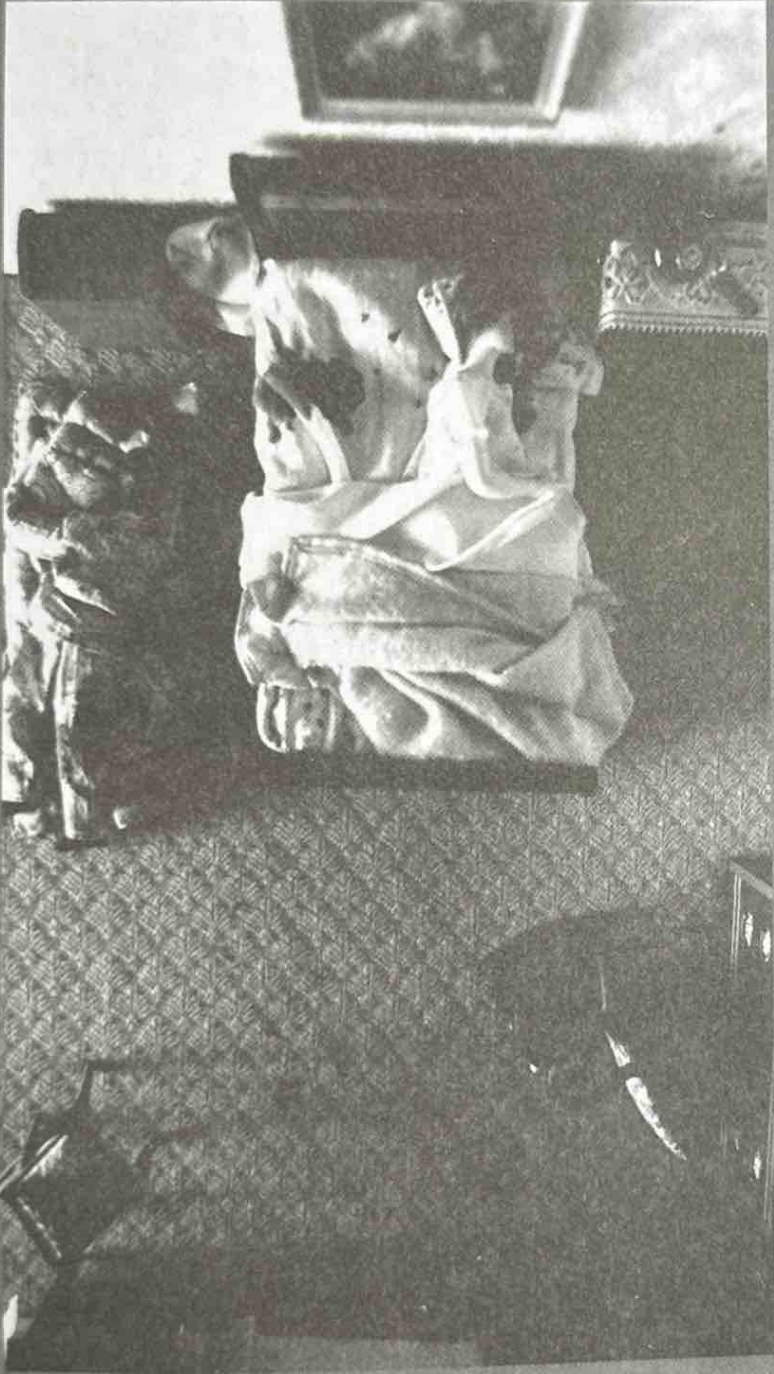
Lieutenant Peale's statement:

On Monday afternoon, August 19, 1946, at 5:25 PM, he received the telephone call from Mrs. Dennison at Police Headquarters, and at once took charge of the matter personally. The customary inquiries were set afoot without results and by Wednesday, August 21, a systematic search of all closed or unoccupied buildings in the vicinity was undertaken. It was not until Friday, August 23 at 4:15 PM, that he and Officer Patrick Sullivan entered the Parsonage and found the premises as represented by the model.

***Temperatures during that week had ranged between 86 and 92 degrees
with high humidity.***

Each study is accompanied by a scenario sheet, similar to the one above, which has more or less information depending on the case. Investigators are given a time frame in which to study the houses and learn from the clues as much as much from what is given as what is missing. Although I am no Nancy Drew, I managed to notice something key in the Dorothy Dennison scenario: the contrast of the plump pinky freshness of the dead girl's skin and the brown-black pockness of the maggoty hamburger meat. This visceral bit of epidermal observation just happens to be key in establishing time of death. As neatly as a stopped watch, the existence of maggots in the hamburger but not on the girl suggests there is a difference in the time of death between the meat and the body. We know when the hamburger was ground and we know when the girl was found. She is considerably less dead than the hamburger.

6





left 7, up 8, right 9

Searching the scene and the body for more clues one can begin to speculate on what happened between Monday and Friday. In this case maggots are good; they are pointers if not full-fledged informants.

Each scene is as much about the living as the dead; they are detailed down to piles of micro cigarette butts, end-burned to invoke an inhabitant's sleepless night or replications of tiny splattered blood patterns to match gun-shot wound results from a particular weapon at a certain distance. While the houses pretend to serve only as simple problem solving tools their elasticity of form and content beg a wider reading. However noble, practical and educational the cause of their creation there is something profoundly engaging and delightfully disturbing about the ordered mania of dollhouses run seriously amok. Visions as far flung as Hunca-Munca running rampant in Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Two Bad Mice*, to Hans Bellmer's surrealist poupees, Cornell's boxes and David Levinthal's toy soldier cult classic *Hitler Moves East* all easily begin to occupy the same territory.

Thus, if their overall visual tenacity ties the houses to real-life crimes and investigators then it is the uncanny *mis-en-scene* of the 1"=1'-0" scale models represented in carefully constructed photographs by Corinne Botz link them to high art.

Akin to the Cindy Sherman's film stills, the dollhouse collection and images is as precisely and self-consciously staged as her Old Master series. In both, the reproductions are made from the omniscient artist as detective point of view. These representations are tweaked to provoke the viewer's complicity in unravelling the scene. Similarly, Sherman's untitled series from 1986, which, like the Nutshell dollhouses, fetishizes scattered bits and pieces of debris: valuables, waste, evidence. These still lifes challenge the voyeur to conduct a point to point analysis of the events in play.

Still lifes have always held that peculiar air capable of both life and death in one breath: violence and calm, fresh and rotting produce, live bugs and dead meat, mixed season cut flowers, flayed bulls and even a Goya *Plucked Turkey*. David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* and Peter Greenaway's *Drowning By Numbers*, among others, effectively highlight the power of this imagery. Tightly framed scenes of suburbia gone awry in the former and everything from flies on fruit in a murdered husband's potting shed to the carefully accumulated daily count of roadkill by a coroner's son are poignant illustrations.



Still life sequences in art and life demand pause. With piercing intensity and disjunctive scale, they are out of sync with their surroundings. Like turquoise blue kitchen cabinets in a modernist housing development, a sudden zoom draws us into the temporal power of the piece and inherently limits our focus. Yet, as *The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists* notes "objects portrayed [in still life] have a significance beyond their individual appearance and are heightened by their associations." Similarly as quoted by Ralph Rugoff in *Scene of the Crime*, Philip Kerr's *A Philosophical Investigation* states that "For the detective, nothing is ever truly itself and nothing more." The Frankfurt Kitchen is not just about which bin holds grain the best, just as the Parsonage Parlor is not just about a dead body. Details of the dollhouses are not mere objects but are avatars. They seem capable of articulating paths, both taken and for-gone. In the end, what the minutia reveals is as frightening as what it hides and what is interpreted is as compelling as what is intended. ☉

IMAGES:

1. Entry hall from *Parsonage Parlor*
2. Pots, Pans and Potatoes from *Kitchen*
3. Kitchen Table from *Three Room Dwelling*
4. Dishcloths from *Two Story Porch*
5. Neighbor from *Two Story Porch*
6. Bloody Couple from *Three Room Dwelling*

ever forget:

a story of monumental
confusion in the eastern bloc



Restored "Bulgarian Revival" or "Bulgarian Renaissance" houses in the Old City of Plovdiv, which is a sort of petting zoo for these types of buildings and is not typical of most of the landscape. The Bulgarians call all buildings "houses," so I don't know what goes in on these.



American graffiti behind Central Post, Plovdiv

23.11.99

PLOVDIV, BULGARIA

I want to paint a picture,
but where to begin?

Brown, the smell of brown coal. A sooty
ground of nausea and comfort. An
animal smell, a chocolate powder.

A backdrop of peeling paint and
crumbling lime plaster, layers of color
and dirt, exposed skeletons of pink
brick and stone. Struggling buildings.
Leprosy facades.

Teenage legs and cigarettes, vinyl
platform shoes and the black arch of a
raised eyebrow.

I want to show you the quietly smolder-
ing trashcans. Curbside fires in the
center city. Levi's ads and Beasties
graffiti. A cafe on every corner, plastic
chairs and tables red like Coca-Cola
awnings.

Gypsy men sell roasted sunflower
seeds while gypsy women, many
skirted, sweep leaves with homemade
brooms. Gypsy children enlist other
gypsy children, all begging in harmony
with saccharine, practiced voices.
They're brown.

Me, I'm conspicuous here. I am living in
Plovdiv for these three months to work
with the Bulgarian National Institute for
Monuments of Culture. As an American,
I can be picked out in any crowd.
I seem to be orange.

Mafia "businessmen" are white against
black Mercedes.

Red, green, purple. The markets: ripe
tomatoes, cucumbers, Tikva squash.
Plums from Sliven, grapes from
Assenovgrad. Babas wear scarves and
galoshes on their bent silhouettes.

People walk upon remains of Thracian,
Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman. The
wooden corbels of the Bulgarian
Revival architecture celebrate release
from five hundred years of Turkish
domination. A forum, a stadium and an
amphitheater, excavated only during
the past thirty years, are within walking
distance of the central post. The former
city of Phillipopolous is a perpetual
archaeological dig.

A thick rind of concrete surrounds the
old city. The Socialist-era flats dirty,
looming, and terrifying to Western eyes.



*Roman ruins are left lying around in
Plovdiv. There are so many of these
piles of rubble, it's really amazing.
This is actually part of the Forum and
lies not ten meters away from the
post office in the next image.*



Front of Central Post, beep beep.



I wonder how small you have to be to get to ride in these things?

After a generation or two, they dissolve to the eyes of the Bulgarians, but to mine they refuse to soften. Grey.

There is the ghost of an iron curtain behind the Golden Arches.

And yellow. Just some spots of yellow in the plaza, a squadron of juvenile motorists in the main square of the former Communist party-house. Some young entrepreneurs have invested in small fleets of battery operated mini-vehicles. The crowded pedestrian square is alert for oncoming police cars, reckless fire-trucks and pink three-wheelers, which rent out for a few ctotinki to eager kids. Shouts of, "Aleksander, Aleksander!" but Aleksander isn't listening, he doesn't stop — not unlike kids in the Western world, he just wants to cruise in his (plastic) Jeep Cherokee.

He just wants to drive.

TEN YEARS GONE

In 1989, the Berlin Wall fell. The end of the 80s marked the end of the Socialist period, not only in East Germany, but in the once-unified Yugoslavia and in the former USSR Eastern Europeans were ready for change and were enthusiastic, hopeful for a quick transition to democracy.

"Socialism was a terrible thing for this country," says Yulia.

Yulia is twenty-five, a young architect in Sofia who encourages her boyfriend, Ivan, to consider emigrating with her to the U.S. New York is the place where she

believes work to be plentiful and life to be more or less fair. Ivan seems to be in agreement, excited about the idea despite Yulia's constant criticism of his *terrible* English.

Why would they choose to leave home now, ten years after democracy came in the night to Bulgaria? For the country's young and ambitious, as well as for those of other formerly Socialist countries, rapid change did not bring rapid progress.

"We can't live here," she emphasizes, glaring at Ivan over espresso cups. He nods solemnly and Yulia gives the table a plastic slap. Coffee jumps.

She says that in New York, people care more about ideals than illegal business deals and bribes for corrupt officials. In New York, Art is in the air. Concepts are important to people. New Yorkers pay attention. New Yorkers are political. She says yes, she knows it's dirty there, too. But in New York, she and Ivan will work hard and live well. She could be right.

Yulia and Ivan are not unique. Bulgarian, Croatian and Russian kids take the S.A.T. and surf the net for American universities in West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, universities that are willing to offer financial aid to foreign undergraduates. Something drives them to leave home at a young age and, despite what they believe, it is more than the prospect of bigger cars, cleaner streets and real Adidas. They observe from earliest childhood a jumpiness and uncertainty in their own history and national identity. They

watch political parties divide and multiply and they see mass excitement followed by palpable disappointment.

The young people of the Eastern Bloc now look to the U.S. to escape this confusion. Many view America as a land of linear progression, where history began with the colonists and followed a straight path to scientific, urban and material progress. There is an attractive orderliness to this rosy view that contrasts starkly with their spotty histories. These kids are nationalistic, but ethnic pride is not enough to prevent their exodus. They are ready to flee the mottled landscapes of home with eyes toward the clarity and good sense of an American horizon.

CLEARING THE SLATE

Yulia points to an empty space.

"You know what that is?"

We're in the Ploshtad Batenburg, in Sofia. She points to a light dusting of rubble near the central park.

According to the 1999 edition of Lonely Planet's guide to Eastern Europe, the vacuum should contain the now vacant Gyorgi Dimitrov Mausoleum, which was the former home of the preserved body of one of Bulgaria's Socialist-era prime ministers. Although his body was removed in the mid-1990s for cremation, Dimitrov's legacy, in the form of the physical building, remained on the site.

"They just destroyed it, it was last month," she says.

She laughs as she remembers how all the grade schools took their students on field trips. Lines of students filled through the building before its demolition. Previous to the final decision to remove the structure, a competition was held to elicit ideas for its architectural reintegration into an evolving urban scene. It was a competition without a winner: not one of the entries was deemed appropriate for an adaptive reuse of the building.

Perhaps in a time of economic hardship there was simply no money to consider a large-scale renovation of a public building. Perhaps the building was

unsafe to stand empty in the square or perhaps demolishing it is preparation for an expansion of the city's neighboring park when funds become available. More likely, however, the removal of this overtly Socialist monument was simply a political gesture.

Other purges of Socialist icons are equally ambiguous. Back in Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second largest city next to Sofia, a potential act of eradication hangs in the balance. The Monument to the Russian Soldier supervises the city from the same hilltop as it has since erected following World War II. Bias reliefs around the statue valorize the Russian troops in combat and the Bulgarian citizens who received them warmly. Today, a sense of gratitude to Communist Russia is not a cherished national memory. Hopefuls for election to city government proposed entirely removing the monument, despite its structural soundness and stately presence. The question is, if the statue was destroyed and the memory of its outline on the horizon faded, would prosperity come more quickly to the country?

"No," says Yulia. "The Russians were our liberators. We cannot erase our Communist history." Ivan is already shaking his head in disagreement. Both are staunchly anti-Communist but the two differ in opinion on this issue. Yulia sees a need for an honest reconciliation between past and future, while Ivan supports a thorough exorcism of any physical evidence that Bulgaria even existed between 1944 and 1989. He doesn't seem to fear history repeating itself the same way she does.

Ironically, although Yulia doesn't want Bulgaria to forget it will be difficult for her to help synthesize Eastern Europe's past and present from her potential new home in an overpriced Brooklyn walk-up. This woman is at once passionate about her homeland and disparaging of a future there. Still, she has her opinions.

"Never forget," says Yulia.

"No," says Ivan. "Ever. Ever forget."



Random political campaign poster. Elections were held in November. Despite major voter apathy, the Christian Democratic Party held in the big cities.



On the hilltop in the background is the Monument to the Russian Soldier overlooking the center of town. Can you see it?

DEAD MOROSE

After the Communist Revolution, Stalin officially replaced Saint Nicholas with "Grandfather Frost," *Ded Moroz* in Russian, as the spirit of Christmas.

"Thinner, more imperious, and less given to ho-ho-hos," this Stalinist Santa did not slide down chimneys but came instead to the front door like any other comrade (*New York Times*, December 24, 1999). Apparently Stalin's efforts to create equality amongst men did not even spare the super-human identities of mythical men. However, this new holiday icon was actually better suited to the changing popular lifestyle of the time – increasingly urban, high-rise oriented and less likely to involve chimneys.

The Bulgarian landscape is littered with such housing projects. The trip from the airport in Sofia to the center city will run a Western visitor through a gauntlet of disturbing images: projects more alienating than any in the U.S. are the norm. The lessons American designers have learned about how not to organize urban housing are all on display.

Clearly, the former Stalinist countries are faced with a dilemma when choosing to blow up or tuck away glaring reminders of the past. However, monuments and mausoleums are empty of living inhabitants, so to-purge-or-not-to-purge becomes a moral decision rather than a pragmatic one. What will become of those Socialist era housing projects so stereotypically bleak in design and reminiscent of obsolete social values? These are living organs, housing families not in rental units but in flats owned by their occupants. City governments can't simply do away with these buildings; they were restituted to private ownership over the past ten years. Yet, because of their ubiquitous presence, these physical reminders of Socialism will persist (possibly until these buildings just fall down) despite all other monumental purgings.



Typical concrete flats with bleak looking jungle-gym type equipment.



photos by elisabeth dubin

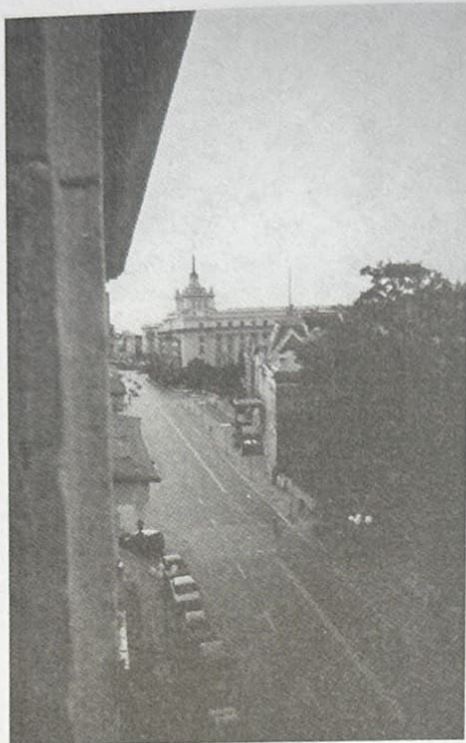
Rattled by the disconcerting incongruities of the Eastern European landscape, young people look to emigrate to escape cultural schizophrenia. An American might assume that they are leaving the grisly visage of housing-block life for economic and political reasons, but it is as much the inconsistency between the obsolete aesthetic of home and a democratic vision of the future that drives them to romanticize the Western world.

THE AIM TO RENAME

No one would argue that it is difficult for a population to be optimistic about the future when the evidence of failed political and social ideas still stand. There are both pros and cons to allowing the old monuments to remain. But what about institutions of culture that do not assume physical form? It is not always an issue of the wrecking ball.

"You cannot understand, in 1989, no one cared about street names."

Yulia is answering my questions about the wholesale renaming of street names in many Eastern European cities both at the beginning and the end of the



Bul. Tzar Osvoboditel

Communist period. In the 40s all tsarist names were changed to those of Communist leaders. In 1989 the old names returned.

"No one would care if they changed the street names every year. When democracy came, people were wondering more if there would be more money. No one was used to being political about things like that. It had always been impossible to be that way."

Why have the new democratic governments of the former Eastern Bloc countries chosen to resurrect the names of Fascists instead of creating new names evocative of a new and modern spirit never before felt in these parts of the world? No one could tell me because no one knows and few are accustomed to care.

In her book describing life in post-Communist Croatia (*Cafe Europa*, 1994), Slavenka Drakulić points out a similar phenomenon. She notes not only the current romanticism of pre-Communist leaders but also other equally strange practices in the re-naming of things. For example, in 1947, Zagreb's main square was given a new name – Square of the Republic. After the change in government, it was given back its pre-party name despite the fact that it is a rather generic and is only intolerable because the Communists dubbed Square of the Republic. Similarly, the former Square of the Victims of Fascism had to be renamed, as if the victims of Fascism could not be any longer remembered because to do so would indicate that the Communists did something positive in their opposition to Fascism.

Despite what Yulia has said, I have trouble believing that no one cared when Committees for the Renaming of Streets resurrected the names that people had been taught to despise and instead held them up as ironic symbols of the new era of democracy. Younger people still don't even use the new (old) names that have been in place now for ten years. Older people never stopped using the old (new) names, even after fifty years of Communism. For a foreigner, it can be difficult to navigate these cities.

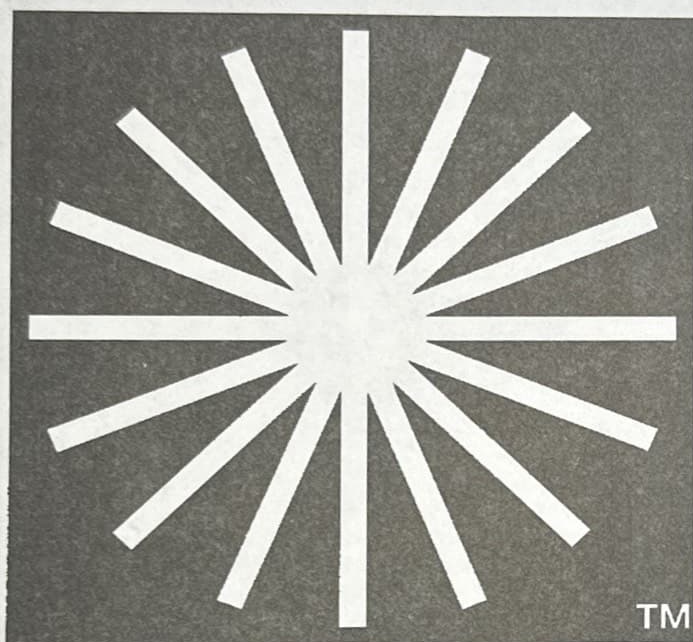
In 1946 Sofia, *Boulevard Mariya Luiza* became *Boulevard Liliana Dimitrova*, from the namesake of a tsar's daughter to that of a Communist Prime Minister's. In 1989, the name reverted. *Tzar Boris III* became *Gyorgi Dimitrov*, then reverted. *Communist Vapsarov* became *Afksenti Veleshki*. *Aleksander Dimitrov* reverted to *Gladstone*, the namesake of an American who had helped Bulgaria repair after the Turkish domination that ended in the nineteenth century. *Vasil Kolarov* became *Kynaz Aleksander*. On the whole, most street names in big cities now bear the names of figures from tsarist Russia (as opposed to the later figures of Communist Russia who we are supposed to forget). *Tzar Osvoboditel*. *Tzar the Liberator*.

This kind of chaos may be relatively invisible when compared to construction debris of demolished statues. Still, it has an unsettling effect on Bulgarian citizens even as they claim not to notice.

"I will tell you why I like New York," says Yulia.

"Because all the streets are straight and there are only numbers and letters to remember."





EAMES OFFICE

GALLERY & STORE

2665 MAIN STREET

Santa Monica CA 90405

310 • 396 • 5991

www.eamesoffice.com



andre is everything and andre is nothing

Shepard Fairey has been plastering Andre the Giant's face on every conceivable surface of the urban landscape for over ten years. He has used stickers, posters and stencils and along the way, GIANT has become the greatest non-brand ever. His campaign to spread the image reaches every corner of the planet and is as ubiquitous as chain stores and more recognizable than most ad campaigns, all without paying a cent for signage. There seems to be more Andre the Giant stickers out there than McDonald's golden arches.

I read an article recently about you in a Los Angeles-based free paper where the writer made you seem so mysterious and serious, which doesn't really seem like you at all. There seems to be this thrill of writing about THE Shepard Fairey that leads writers to take this very serious tone.

He tried to make it seem like he was all cool in the article, but when he was there, he was pissing his pants. When the cops came, he was shaking. There was a Kinko's and he went inside and paid money to get on a computer to look like he was doing something legit. The whole block was locked down with five security officers and when we went back to retrieve the car, he stayed at Kinko's and was like, "Well fellas, it's getting late and I think I'll be going." We hit some places in Silver Lake and came back to the spot where we almost got nailed and finished it at four in the morning. When those guys who called the cops came back the next night they must have been so pissed. We were up on the roof and did this whole panel thing and did some big stuff on two sides of the building. It was an abandoned building so I don't know why they cared. I guess they just didn't want it to get graffitied because the city makes them clean it, but the work looks so organized that there's no way the city would ever make them clean it up.

It was an exciting night, but the following weekend I did some billboards with some press people in tow and I decided that I'm never doing that again. It's too stressful because those people don't know what the fuck is going on. They always pull out a camera in the middle of the whole thing and make everything so obvious and I'm like, "What are you doing?" I just decided I'm not going to do that anymore. There's enough first hand accounts. Everyone else can experience it after it's finished.

I've seen your work on walls, poles and freeway overpasses near the galleries where your work is being shown. Which location works better, the street or the gallery? Or are they just different?

Street. Definitely. The work was created in reaction to – and inspired by well, reaction sounds totally negative and it's not a negative thing – but a reaction to the graphics around me, which are mostly related to advertising. Some of it is advertising for things that I'm into (like music or skateboarding) and some of it is just ads that I want to make fun of. So it being experienced on the street is much more realistic to the thing that catalyzed it, that stimulated it. A gallery is such an elitist environment. It really is so safe. You are more or less preaching to the converted in a gallery. Those people, if they went to art school, are probably pretty well educated, and they have a good idea of what's going on around them in terms of politics or whatever. They are probably not the type of person that just comes home from work and eats a TV Dinner and goes to a blue-collar job the next day. Those people are the ones most dramatically affected when they have been sleepwalking through life absorbing all this imagery and then all of a sudden there is something out there that doesn't make sense 'cause it's not selling anything and it doesn't have this overt political agenda. Those people are the ones that benefit the most from it.

I guess I'm doing this for a few reasons. I'm doing it because I like making art, because I like the adrenaline rush I get out of putting it up and fucking the system over. I don't know whether that's good or bad. In a way it is bad because in a lot of ways, I think I'm above the law just because I'm smart enough to see that a lot of it is bullshit. And that's not really how it works. Just because you are smart enough to see that a lot of it is bullshit, doesn't mean that you are going to get away with it. I've paid the price a few times....

How many times have you been hauled in?

Five.

In which cities?

Long Beach; New York; Philadelphia; Charleston, SC; Providence, RI and I got a citation here in San Diego, but nothing really happened. I also got shut down by the City Council and all the Powers That Be in San Diego. The city public relations officer did some research, came to my office and found out who I am and warned me that things were coming to a head and said that the DA would be forming a law suit against me and my company. He was actually pretty cool. He said that people were concerned because my work lowers the property value whether it's on public or private property. The local merchant association was really pissed at me for doing stuff downtown. They are a group that can get the street that they are on paved twice a year instead of once every five years because their businesses are pumping so much money into the economy. I don't think that's fair, but that's the facts.

That's something I had to come to terms with. As much as, principally, I think it's bullshit, I can't put anything up in San Diego anymore because I'm either going to be fined or incarcerated, it's not worth it. So there are people emailing me that are all, [whining voice] "Man, don't give up!" because they read newspaper articles about it, but what do they know? I've done my thing hardcore for three years, and I think, "If you're so into it, why don't you do something similar instead of telling me not to stop?" This one guy was like, [mock-serious voice] "If you stop, you're just contributing to the provinciality of San Diego like everyone else does," and I'm thinking, "What have you done? You can write email, but are you putting shit up?" That sort of stuff bugs me.

I'm not trying to be a role model. It's cool when people are inspired by me, but I'm doing this for my own reasons. I don't feel like I owe anything to anyone or they owe anything to me. I'm just doing this because I want to do it. One of the things I really hate is when people get self-righteous and didactic about stuff and I really don't want to be that. I think I can't help but sound that way sometimes when I say companies are stupid and the government is stupid and a lot of the rhetoric that's kind of true, but really, the way I feel is that I am doing this for my own reasons and any sort of good or bad is all on me.

The original sticker says "Andre the Giant has a posse" and people take that really literally and think that there is some sort of membership or whatever and I, actually, don't even like membership. It's cool when people help to put the stuff up, but then it gets into [mock condescending voice] "I'm officially putting the stickers up so I am better than you are...."

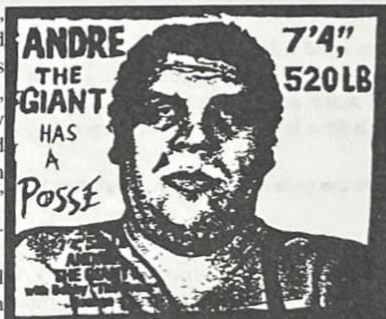
I'm part of the posse...

Yeah, "I'm part of the posse because I sent Shepard an email." It's funny when you analyze it and that's part of what I enjoy, but it's weird when something you are doing takes on a life of its own that's sometimes not what you want it to be. I think it's unavoidable. There has never been some sort of a thing where you send your name and ten bucks for membership.

For the most part, the people who send me an email or write me are cool and they understand. There are a few dumbasses now and then. There was this one guy that sent me something that said, "Why don't you make a sticker of..." and then he named the cop's name that Mumia supposedly killed. I don't really know where the truth is in that case, but my feeling is that the cops abused their power more. Everything about Mumia's character that I have read suggests that he's probably guilty of manslaughter at best and that the cops are fucking with him. Anyway, this guy was telling me to make an anti-Mumia sticker with this cop having a posse and I'm thinking, "I can't believe this guy is into my stuff and he thinks that."

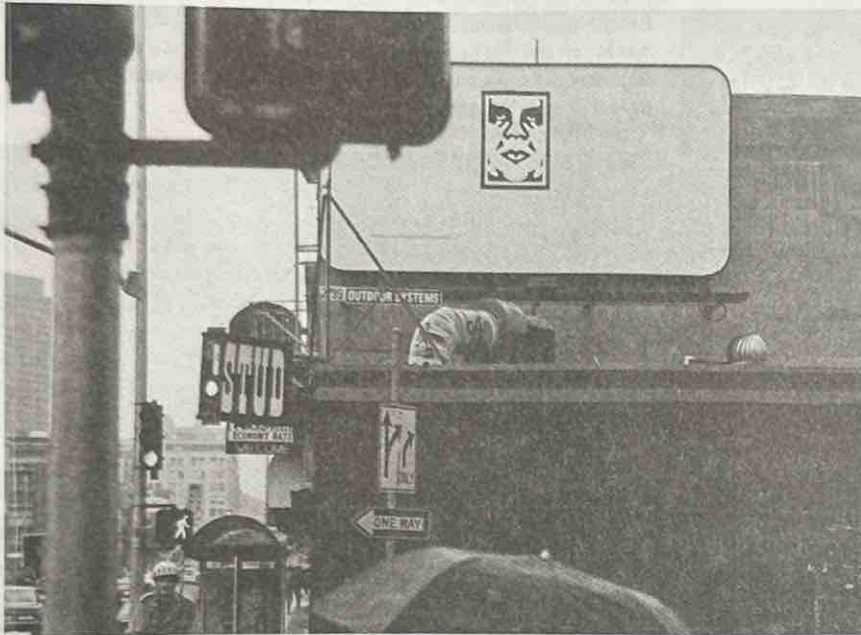
Your original stickers were the posse ones, when did you introduce the OBEY concept?

I started doing the OBEY stickers in 1995. I'll tell you how the OBEY and the communist stuff came in. The stickers I did from 89-94 were just derivations of the original sticker with the same head but with flames or leopard skin. I made stuff like Andre as Jimi Hendrix, Andre as Gene Simmons and Andre's face in Neal Armstrong's helmet in that first moonwalk picture. I did a Peter Max-style 70s poster where Andre is in the middle with two chicks with microphones on either side singing with this rainbow and psychedelic patterns and 3D 70s type in the sky in the back. It's got Andre with sunglasses on, really goofy sunglasses with a psychedelic pattern forming the reflections. Super-funny stuff like that. It was all about appropriating different sort of pop culture genres and icons and re-doing them. It's a Taoist thing. Andre is everything and Andre is nothing.



That was my strategy. Logo rip-off and popular icon hijacking was the technique to provide resonance. All the stuff, I thought, was humorous. It was all humor, but I guess just by the nature of the proliferation of the stickers being mysterious and cult-like, especially to the conservative person who fears that sort of thing, I realized that there was a lot of negative reaction, even to the original Andre the Giant has a Posse stickers. When I first started putting them up, there would be a sign full of stickers and I'd go by and everything would be great and the next day only the Giant sticker would have a key raked through it so that it was ripped to oblivion. You could barely even see what it was and all the other stickers would be fine. It wasn't as though someone thought that stickers are bad and tried to get rid of them. Specifically, they hated my sticker.

One time I was putting up a poster with wallpaper paste in Providence and this guy confronted me about it and he was like, "Dude, what is that?" I asked him what he thought it was and he says, "You're the one putting it up, you must know." I told him that someone gave me the posters to put up and I asked what he thought it meant and he's like, "You know! You're lying! Tell me what it is!" and he was with these two girls and you could tell that he was feeling like a



cornered animal, being forced to interpret it in front of the girls. He didn't like that. So I asked him what he thought about advertising, TV, MTV, etc. and if he thought people ever get manipulated or brainwashed by that stuff. He got all upset and goes, "DUDE!" and puts his finger on my chest and says, "You're the one that's fucking brainwashed! You're a fucking brainwashed asshole!" He was going off on me, and I realized that when people don't know what something is, they feel threatened by it.

I never really predicted this direction, but I thought it called for me to push it and I figured the more extreme the reaction to it, positive or negative, the more of a dialogue would ensue. Creating something from nothing, the biggest coup possible, was always my goal. Emotion is very important and I wanted to do something inflammatory. Have you seen the movie *They Live*?

No...

Awww. You gotta see it. Rent it. There is this paradox. It's really goofy, but it also touches on some serious topics metaphorically, which are.... Well, I should explain the movie. Rowdy Roddy Piper, the wrestler, is a construction worker who gets laid off. He goes to live in this tent camp while he's looking for work. The people there are kind of weird, but benevolent and philanthropic, so they're presented as mysterious good guys. One day he sees them working up in this building and he sees them doing something that looks like chemistry and then the next day the cops come and tear down the whole camp and run everyone off and destroy the building. Rowdy thinks this might be related to what he saw up there, so he goes to where the building was and finds this box of sunglasses in the rubble. He puts them on and everything turns black and white and, for the first time, he sees that half the people in the world are aliens and they are all the authoritarians, rich people, business people and the cops. You can only see this when you are wearing sunglasses. Then he looks at billboards and the billboards, instead of "Tahiti Vacation," say "OBEY" or "CONSUME" or "SLEEP AND WATCH TV." He looks at some guy holding money and the money says in black type on white paper, "THIS IS YOUR GOD." It's dope.

I thought that was awesome. I like the idea of a metaphor of something underlying that no one notices that is very insidious and needs to have attention called to it. People are sleepwalking through life and don't notice that stuff, so I decided to start using OBEY. It was a mockery of obedience, of course, but it still pissed people off.



I went through this slow growth curve until 1995 and then there was this intense period of graphic and conceptual growth. That was when I came up with OBEY and also when I came up with the streamlined face. It was also when I started using all the red, black and white and the communist imagery. One of the reasons the communist imagery (and the red, black and white) came about was that I decided that stickers and stencils weren't really enough. I wanted to do something that was more confrontational and a little larger in scale. I'd done some billboards in the past, but I wasn't on the billboard kick like I am now.

The poster artist Robbie Conal inspired me. I had seen his stuff on the street in LA in 1988 and always thought it was cool and his stuff was one of the reasons I got into poster art. He seemed like the only contemporary person doing poster propaganda. Everything else seemed to only pop up during wars. I thought it was cool that this was his art and that he was satisfying his desire to make art, but he was also making a statement and using humor. I wanted to do that in my work too, but not have it be so topical or up to the moment.

I wanted to make more posters and poster them in the fashion of Robbie Conal. I was living in Providence, Rhode Island, at the time and I was within driving distance of Boston and New York as well as Philadelphia, but I had no money. My strategy was to figure out the cheapest way to do it. I used to hang out at Kinko's back then because I did all my art there. I didn't even know how to use a computer. The Kinko's in Providence had some copiers that had red toner and I decided to design my posters in red and black so I could make 11"x17" posters by just running sheets through the copier twice. I either had people who would give me free copies or I could rig the machines to get free copies, so I really never paid for anything.

I liked the way the 11"x17" version came out and I decided to print 18"x24" posters. I would do 100 on thin paper for posting on the street and 100 on thick paper for selling. I was losing money on that because there was no audience to buy my posters, so I ended up sitting on all those until the last two years. But that was good, because I've been selling them now and recouping the money.

Of course, that Kinko's color palette leant itself nicely to the communist imagery which is, once again, very antagonistic. That antagonistic look is how we have perpetuated the arms race for the last seventy-five years. That whole industry survives on fear of Communism. It's pretty ingrained in people to think that look undermines freedom and the American way of life. I'm not promoting Communism; I'm just making fun of blind patriotism that's based on symbolism rather than threat. I think it's hilarious that people get mad at it. Also, that stuff is good art, so there is a lot of factors converging there.

What about Barbara Kruger? You were telling me a few weeks back about seeing her show in LA.

The first incarnation of the OBEY poster was the old school head with just a black, bold OBEY using Futura Extra Bold Oblique, which is what Barbara Kruger uses. Once I did that, I thought that I should really take this all the way and do it more Barbara Kruger style and have the same type, but have it knocked out of a red box in white, because that's what she did. She used a lot of cropped images and so I cropped the old school face close up. When I did the streamlined face, I started using OBEY underneath that version. The reason I chose Barbara Kruger is because her work has become so synonymous with a contemporary, politically charged message, whether it's around abortion or any women's issue. I see her stuff, or rip-offs of her stuff, on college campus bulletin boards so much that it seems like a language that speaks seriously to people in the age group that I want to reach. I wanted my work to be like, "Oh shit, what's this about?" I wanted to have that immediate, instantaneous response from people due to those devices that have been proven through her work. It's not even so much about her as the devices she uses that have become so synonymous with a politically charged message.

I've done some Warhol knock-offs that are a funny, Pop Art statement, but my more Kruger-influenced stuff isn't funny, it's meant to be taken seriously, at least symbolically seriously. Then you notice it's Giant, and it's funny, but it's not immediately funny. I've stuck with that type, that device, for a lot of the stuff because I think it's effective.

I like Warhol a lot conceptually, taking an everyday object and making it fine art, sort of making fun of the fine art world. I'm not making fun of the fine art world, though; I'm making fun of the whole world.

In the new *Paper Magazine*, there is a spread with a fey model in OBEY GIANT boxers which seems a bit absurd. Can this get too ubiquitous?

No.

Where would you draw the line? If Coke wanted to pay you to put Andre on their can, would you be interested?



I wouldn't let them do it. I wouldn't sanction that, but when we [BLKMRKT, the design firm Shepard is part owner of] did the Mountain Dew can redesign, one of the background patterns that we did was an organic, amorphous cloudy pattern and I actually snuck a cropped view of Andre's face into the pattern. It was subtle, but if I pointed it out to you, it would be like the Joe Camel thing, you would totally see it. They didn't end up going with that design, but it would have been an amazing coup to have done it without their permission. To have them try to appropriate it, make it corporate and official... I wouldn't be into that. That wouldn't be in the spirit. That would be too big a jump, but I am definitely into letting it take its natural course, even if that means popular embrace and commercial

success. I'm not going to try to prohibit it from doing that because one of the things that I am trying to do is see how absurd this thing can be and how far it can go. To think that Coke would do that is so ridiculous, but I would definitely do it if the time were right.

Then all I would do is write my whole exposé on the workings, the mechanics, the history of it that makes everyone feel dumb or at least they can laugh at themselves. It's definitely going to make some of the people that gave my image a corporate subsidy feel dumb.

I was over on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley and I had a GIANT sticker and these kids were asking me how they could contact you. Are you aware of how famous you are?

Weird stuff does happen sometimes. I was up on a billboard in Los Angeles putting a thing up and some guy drove by in a Range Rover and yelled, "Go Shepard Fairey!!!" As long as the cops don't know me that well.

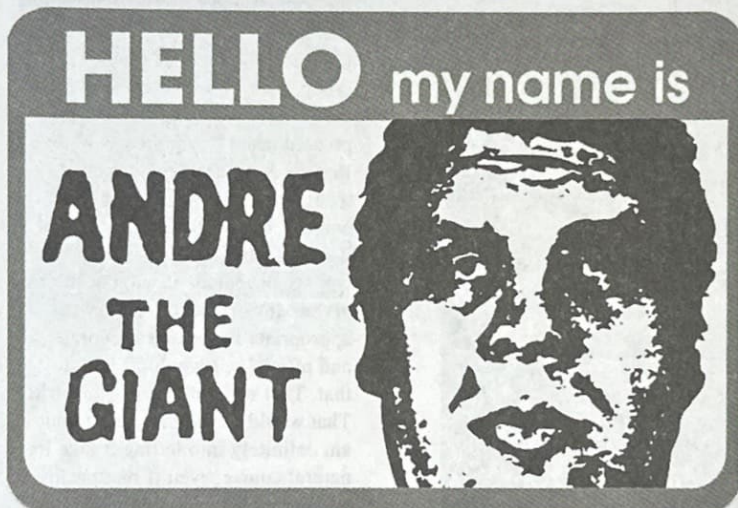
I wanted to ask you about consumption and consumerism. I can see your work literally on the corner right outside my place, but yet I bought a poster from you a few months back. Why do you think people need to buy your posters, stickers or T-shirts?

I think there is a couple of reasons. A lot of people just like the art, which is why you buy anything to hang on your wall. The other reason is that it's cool by association or rebellious by association. A lot of people don't really do their own thing so they live vicariously through symbols. I have certainly done that. I'm into punk rock stuff and I never had my own band, but I loved what those bands I was into symbolized, so I made bootleg Sex Pistols, Husker Du and Dead Kennedys shirts. I also made shirts of skateboard companies that I thought were cool and had the badass team riders who were rebellious and did the gnarliest tricks... I always wanted to have the shirts or make the shirts of those companies. I skated and I got ill, but it was more than that and I couldn't just leave it at that. I had to do it to the fullest. I had to wear the stuff.

Which brands?

Independent and Thunder trucks had the badass images. For a little while when Vision came out, they had a really good image and I liked their stuff, but they got cheesy as they got more corporate. I liked Dogtown's image, too. That was the stuff that I was into..

But getting back to the consumption, I think a lot of the kids like it because they see my stuff on the street and maybe they are into putting stickers up themselves. In a way, it's like saying I participate in this thing that is rebellious and I am not a normal conformist. Unfortunately, the more people that do it, the more conformist it seems. Anything can get watered down and, I know that's what you meant when you asked about becoming too ubiquitous, but that is unavoidable.



We have to wear clothes every day and you might as well wear what you like, but to be too obsessed with that comes from insecurity. People that are slaves to fashion are pathetic and I feel sorry for them, but they also make me mad because they usually use that as a weapon against other people that don't care about fashion as much because that's a way they can feel that they are superior. And then it perpetuates and everyone's insecurity perpetuates and you have to have this or that to be cool. There is a very fine line between being sensitive to aesthetics and being obsessed with self-image and being cool and with trying to make others feel uncool just so you can feel cool. Advertising is designed to make people feel insecure, to make them feel fat or ugly or that if they have this product they will get laid more. No one's making you buy anything. You can't blame the advertising. You have to blame the mentality of the people.

What I am trying to do is make something that is so ridiculous that it can't really fit into that paradigm in a justifiable way once you examine it. Therefore it's gonna make people feel silly for using it like that and for saying "I'm cool because I have a GIANT shirt."

But you are making products for people to buy. You're making clothes and skateboards, right?

I'm into making the items because it's more canvases. Those things give me more ways to get it out there. How I conduct myself personally and what I say in interviews may combat or undermine that mentality that takes items like, Polo or Nautica or Tommy Hilfigger, which can be used as fashion items or as a symbol and uses them as a way to be cooler. For me to be able to be as visible and vocal as I am and say that that's not what it's about, at least is going to get some of the kids arguing with some of the other kids about and thinking about what the stuff that you decide to wear or skate means. I think that's valuable.

Any shows coming up?

People can see more about my posters and shows, etc. at my web site www.obeygiant.com.

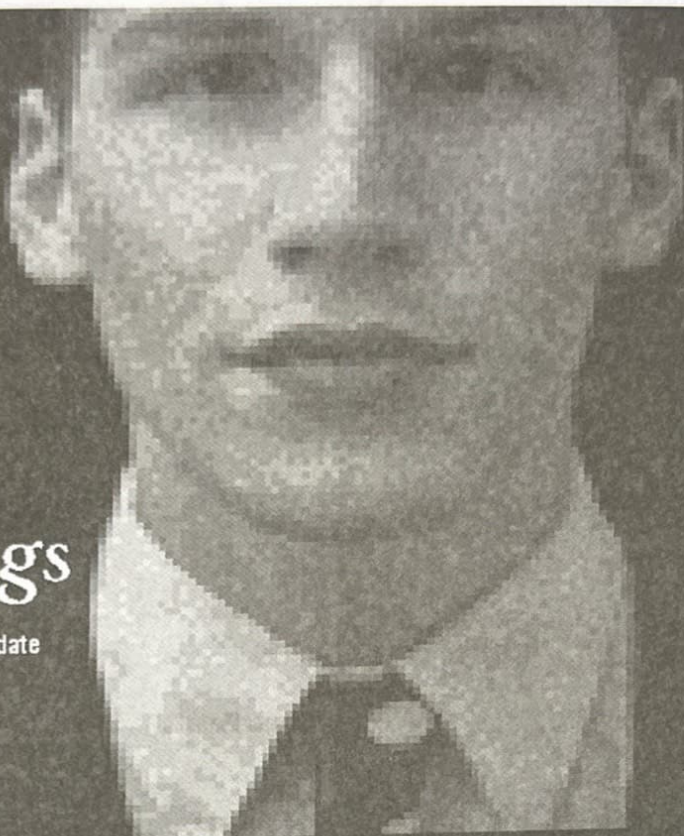
UCLA School of Theater, Film & Television

him bye e cummings

Directed by Bryan Jackson, MFA Thesis Candidate

April 21-29

Macgowan Little Theater 310.825.2101 www.cto.ucla.edu



subscribe to loud paper

\$15.00 post paid for four issues.
(Canada and international rates will vary)

Just clip this card and send cash or check
made out to: Mimi Zeiger c/o loud paper.

name: _____

address: _____

city, state: _____

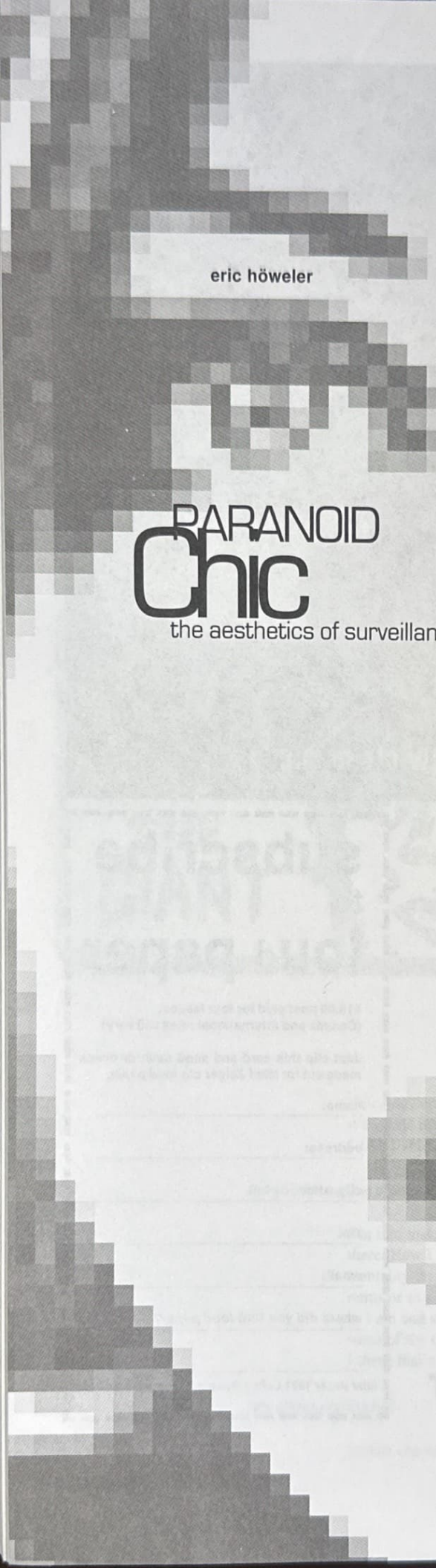
zip: _____

email: _____

where did you find loud paper? _____

loud paper 1521 LeRoy Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94708

www.binginit.com/loudpaper



eric höweler

PARANOID Chic

the aesthetics of surveillance

OUR VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE WORLD IS continually scanned by electronic technologies. The paranoid state is not the exception, but the norm. Its claims of conspiracy and persecution seem ever more justified in the Postmodern, post-contemporary, post-millennial world. There is a reemergence of a new kind of paranoia in fashion photography, design and advertising: Paranoid Chic, or the aesthetics of surveillance.

In 1928 Salvador Dalí posited the paranoid state as a critical tool in his surrealist revolution. His paranoid critical method (PCM) was a strategy to engage the world, viewing objects with heightened awareness, to "systematize confusion" and to "contribute to the total discrediting of the world of reality." As with many styles, trends or "isms," Paranoid Chic emerges in fashion, only after it has appeared in other more radical forms. The critique of rationality posited by Dalí, here returns as an aesthetic. Fashion, as system of appropriation, adaptation and aestheticization,

takes the state of surveillance as its given and the paranoid individual as its subject. Packaged and marketed, the fashion system transforms a condition into a commodity.

A billboard in Times Square epitomizes Paranoid Chic. A couple in an elevator is oblivious to the camera. They are caught up in a slouchy embrace. Above the image is an image of a surveillance camera — presumably the camera that recorded the image below it — creating a kind of surveillance diptych. Surveillance is a given, it is everywhere. Surveillance is sexy. Big Brother is watching, so you have to look good.

Looking through an issue of *Wallpaper*, "The stuff that surrounds you" (sounds paranoid to me), examples of Paranoid Chic abound: clothes, advertising campaigns, graphics, interior designs, product designs. Design is going paranoid. Clothes and products are survival equipment, padded, strapped, sleek and transportable. Graphics are instructive, disjointed. Interiors are sparse, bunkers for the impending disaster.



Estee Lauder's ad for futurist lipstick shows a startled Elizabeth Hurley. Zoomed in and slightly washed out by the lights, her mouth is just open, suggesting surprise. Her eyes are wide open, staring at the camera, but also through the camera. She's looking at some threat beyond. She's not smiling. She's not inviting; she's scared. Anxious and overexposed, Hurley represents the paranoid condition in all of us. The camera is intrusive. Its images are voyeuristic. They offer glimpses of other lives. Celebrities exist in the glare of the lights and in the overexposure of the camera. In a sense, the glare is sexy. Hurley's startled look is the overexposed look that we desire. It is the look that we purchase.

Wallpaper's fashion spread "Things to make you safe" displays urban outfits on models photographed in martial arts poses. "Kicking off, chop till you drop-brush up on your martial arts," shows a male model — "Goatskin vest, by Gucci. Long-sleeved T-shirt by Comme des Garçons. Vinyl trousers, shoes, from Jil Sander" reads the copy — in a



series of Aikido poses: kicking, crouching, punching. "Fend off stalkers...keep the paparazzi at arm's length... Wallpaper special branch offers necessary protection." In "Stand by me. Keep your own company with a burly bodyguard," a man in white is shielded by a headset and sunglasses clad bodyguard. The protectee — "Cashmere coat, by Gucci. Vinyl trousers, by Jil Sander" — looks intently through an open door, as the protector — "Protector, by Excel Protection. Suit, by Hugo Boss. Black T-shirt by Comme des Garçons. Sunglasses by Versace" — gestures defensively at the photographer. The paparazzi make the star. The desire to be a star is the desire to be pursued. To be hounded is glamorous. Surveillance is sexy. Paranoid Chic is a kind of exhibitionism. "I know you're looking at me." It is a willed pathology of persecution.



Red Kamel Cigarettes employs a pulp detective fiction drawing to show how their cigarettes engender paranoia and pursuit. A seated woman holds a pack of cigarettes and looks over her shoulder at two goons in hats, gloves and overcoats. The ad reads "Damn it all, the Red Kamel pack had blown her cover. Liz wondered if she could get a smoke in before they grabbed her." Pursued for smoking Red Kamel, the product gives Liz away: it makes her stand out persecuted for pleasure. You want pursuit. You can buy it with Red Kamel.



A Versace watch is displayed prominently on the wrist of a woman wearing a sequin dress. The image is not glossy. It is grainy, as if the lazy pan of a surveillance camera captured it. The woman, her elbow raised, seems to be fending off an attack by a shirtless black man. The lighting suggests a parking garage or a service corridor. Her dress suggests a cocktail party. Out of context, but wearing Versace, she's the object of unwanted attention. Her heavy eye shadow makeup anticipates the bruises of the impending attack. Her raised elbow, her only fortification, is precisely the gesture that highlights the watch. The product is privileged through the act of defense.



ADAPT TO YOUR ENVIRONMENT

FIRE&ICE

Fire & Ice depicts a woman in a puffy jacket staring intently to her left. Viewed from below, the ceiling seems to be a waffle concrete slab, possibly in a parking garage or an institutional building. The low level of light suggests that it is night. The woman's intent gaze seems to be alert, ready for an attacker or stalker. The text reads "Adapt to your environment. Brace yourself for the elements – urban and otherwise with the latest sportswear series by fire and ice." The environment is hazardous you need sportswear. The commodity is the equipment that will protect you. First buy fear, then buy its paraphernalia.

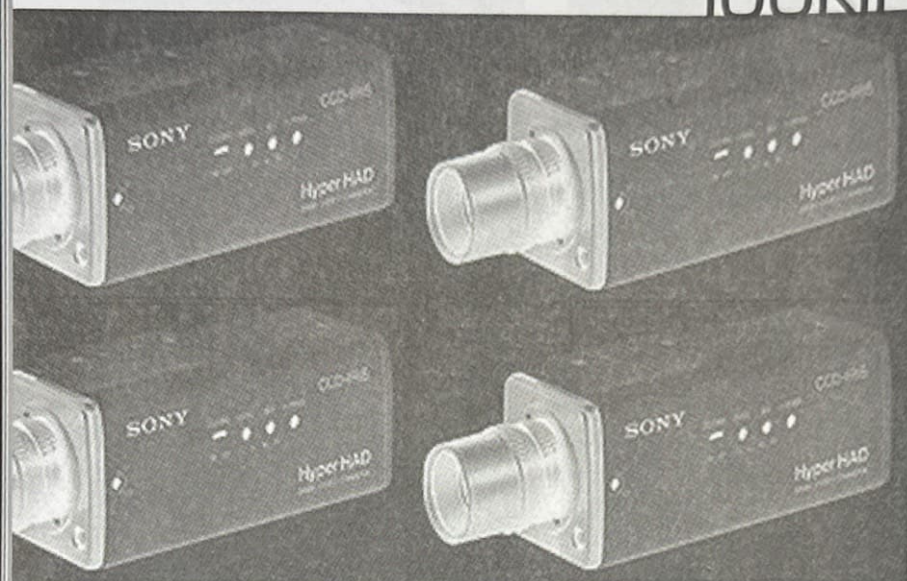
A two-page Salem cigarette ad consists of a black page with a circular die-cut window. In the cutout is visible a distorted wide-angle image of a man in a suit, hat and sunglasses with his fist raised as if knocking on the door you are peeping through. The man's dress suggests a gangster or loan shark coming to collect money. Turning the page reveals the image is a reflection in a necklace, where the other reflections show the same man dancing. The necklace is worn by a blue lipstick wearing, Salem cigarette smoking, long-nailed woman. The image taken out of context turned the dancing reflection into a menace. "It's not what you expect" reads the text on the inside page – its much worse. Peering through the peepholes in our lives, locked behind closed doors, the ad locates us in a dark defensive space. The wide-angle lens distorts the messages: Salem cigarettes, menacing man, dancing man. In the barrage of signals, the paranoid lens paints a grim picture.



Gilles Deleuze argues that we no longer live in a society of discipline (as defined by Michel Foucault) but in a society of control. Conventional structures of vision and power are replaced by structures of information, credit and control. Although we occupy a highly media encrusted world, the primary means of control are not visual. Surveillance is out-moded. Control occurs on different levels: through credit checks, career moves and medical histories. The fashionability of surveillance is nostalgic. It is a will to return to an acutely visual world. Stripped of any functional surveillance, Paranoid Chic operates on the level of aesthetic.

Paranoid Chic is the *look*. It replaces the superwaif and heroin chic; its subjects are distracted, anxiety ridden, pursued and glamorous. Its paraphernalia is strapped, padded and portable. Seducing with images of fashionable body armor and defensible space, it is the stuff that surrounds us. In a world saturated with visuals, the products of Paranoid Chic commodify the chase. ☹

looking out for you



The 1990s will most likely be the last decade in which it feels unusual to be watched by a surveillance camera while indoors.

"WE'RE LOOKING OUT FOR YOU!" boasts a cheerful poster at a suburban shopping mall, the powers that peek exulting in their triumph over their guests' personal liberties. No one seems to mind they're used to it.

Over the past two or three years, closed-circuit security camera systems have fallen drastically in price and increased enormously in popularity. The term "closed circuit" simply means that the signals picked up by the cameras are not broadcast, but fed to monitors by wires. The main reason the spy camera industry is booming so massively is that the technology of closed-circuit cameras has increased by leaps and bounds. Gone are the bulky, low-resolution black-and-white surveillance systems that were most common in the 80s and early 90s. Typical now are high-resolution, full-color systems that function with cameras that fit in the palm of one's hand.

In a manner horribly reminiscent of George Orwell's 1984, cameras are popping up in virtually all public and semi-public areas, including government buildings, hotels, office towers, factories, recreation centers, shopping malls and commercial enterprises of all varieties.

Increasingly, cameras are beginning to pop up outdoors. Roads have been watched for awhile now, with varying degrees of success. A more recent innovation is the surveillance of public walkways. I was recently surprised to stumble upon a new "This Area Under Surveillance"

sign while walking across the York University campus. I was on the verge of dismissing the sign as a lie when I spotted the camera peering down on me from far away: atop the roof of a fifteen-storey building. I got chills. Factories, offices and shopping centers have begun to add bionic eyes to the outsides of their buildings so they can peer out at their surroundings, the latest development in the ongoing evolutionary process by which institutions shall become organisms.

Surveillance is a sad fact of modern exploration—so read carefully.

Non-covert cameras are designed to create paranoia, not to catch criminals.

NON-COVERT CAMERAS

For the most part, the watchers are not subtle, nor do they appear to be ashamed of themselves. In fact, the majority of cameras seem designed not to catch true criminals, who can easily spot the cameras and work around them, but to intimidate ordinary people into being on their best behavior.

The true purpose of non-covert cameras is made obvious by the very fact of their blatancy. One of the most obvious examples is the incredibly popular tinted dome camera, which comes in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, for mounting on walls or ceilings. Dome cameras give the impression of constant 360 degree surveillance, but usually just contain a normal camera look-

ing in one direction and struggling to peer through the tinted glass. In unusual lighting conditions, one can see where the camera inside a dome is pointing and sometimes the camera is aimed at a blank wall or off into space. Who knows if these cameras are turned on or if they're even real?

Almost as bad are big bulky hanging cameras. In this age of cheap miniaturized electronics, these ludicrous relics serve no purpose other than to exclaim their presence in the most obvious way possible. Sometimes these will also feature blinking LEDs or even an accompanying monitor to further demonstrate the fact that all that pass are being watched.

Only slightly less blatant than dome cameras and bulky hanging cameras are ceiling-mounted cameras, which are possibly the most common variety. These cameras hang from ceilings inside triangular casings, and often feature a red LED just to make sure they aren't too subtle.

An important skill for any urban explorer to acquire is Camera Awareness. One should always know when a non-covert camera is watching. Basically it's a simple matter of keeping your eyes on the ceiling, as that's where almost all cameras are installed. For practice, play "spot the camera" whenever you're out and about. You may be amazed.

Covert cameras are so easily hidden that they could be watching at any time.

COVERT CAMERAS

Covert cameras are the next big thing. Currently being pitched by surveillance companies across Canada and the United States, these cheap, miniature spy cameras encourage paranoid shopkeepers and paranoid bosses to install systems that will breed paranoid customers and paranoid employees.

Covert cameras are even more sinister than their sister species. Whereas non-covert cameras exist largely to intimidate and create fear, covert cameras are truly designed to gather images and information which private citizens would prefer to keep to themselves.

Criminals aren't the real targets of these cameras. Companies such as 007-Eleven Security pitch such merchandise as mirror cameras, smoke detector cameras, emergency light cameras, motion detector cameras, clock cameras, phone cameras and even duck-picture cameras, recommending that employers use them to keep an eye on employees and that homeowners use them to keep an eye on babysitters. Incidentally, the smoke detectors don't actually work, but at least you'll be able to capture the house burning down on film.

Here's a secret not widely known: all bank machines have cameras behind their screens, and every transaction is recorded on film.

In a world where a quality closed-circuit camera is the size of a microchip, it's almost impossible for us to ever be sure that we aren't being watched.

DON'T ABANDON ALL HOPE

Of course, none of this is to say that you should become so paranoid that you never again do anything outside the privacy of your own darkened bathroom. To a tremendous extent, cameras exist not to monitor, but to create an impression of monitoring. As any good agnostic knows, one cannot allow the impression of constant surveillance to prevent one from having a good time.

Merchants across the nation are cheerfully lying to their customers with the full consent of the law. Since real security systems are generally too expensive for most small shops, dummy cameras, which retail for around \$50, have become all the rage. These dummy camera systems generally include a supply of signs stating that the premises are being monitored by closed-circuit television. Whereas the cameras themselves are merely deceptive, the accompanying signs are flat out lies. In a bizarre twist on dystopian science fiction, the powers that be are ridiculously eager to convince us that they are violating our privacy, even though they aren't willing to shell out the cash to do it properly. In the near future we can expect to see large signs in malls reading "Big Brother is watching you. Honest."

Dummy cameras aren't the only cameras to offer a false sense of security. Often, when proper closed-circuit camera systems become obsolete or break, a fairly common

This article originally appeared in *Infiltration* 3 (March 1997).

The full version of *Infiltration* can be ordered for \$2 cash (US or Canadian) from
Infiltration, PO Box 66069, Pickering Town Centre
PO, Pickering, Ontario, L1V 6P7, Canada.
Website: www.infiltration.org.

Please toss any comments, queries or contributions to Ninjalicious.

occurrence when highly sensitive electronics are left outside, the security departments don't bother to fix them. Yet, they're still doing the job of intimidating people. After a recent incident at K-State campus in which a student assault was not caught on film, security chief Robert Mellgren admitted that only two of the campus' ten security cameras were in working order. "Cameras don't protect people. People protect people," he explained, but added "people are scared of being caught on camera."

In an interesting sidenote, courts have ruled that when cameras are in place, employees and customers have a reasonable expectation that they are "being protected." If someone is injured during a crime in an area "protected" by dummy cameras, the employer could very likely lose a costly security negligence lawsuit.

Many fully functional cameras are really nothing more than dummy cameras. It is quite rare for an institution to have more than one person watching its closed-circuit televisions at any one time. In many situations, no one is assigned to watch the monitors, as employers view it as a waste of manpower and employees view it as a tremendously mind-numbing chore. Think of all the unmonitored camera banks that you've seen yourself. It's incredibly rare for someone to actually sit and do nothing else but watch the monitors. Furthermore, often one monitor flips between the input of a dozen cameras. This means one has a one-in-twelve chance of being seen, if anyone's watching. ☐

an interview with
Ninjalicious, editor of
Infiltration: the zine
about going places
you're not
supposed to go



mary walling blackburn

I've trodden civic monuments, primly following cheerleader-bright, yellow-haired State Capital guides, but I believe there is a real thirst for something beyond the safety and sweetness of the guided tour. *Infiltration: the zine about going places you're not supposed to go*, is a small Canadian independent publication, dedicated to experiencing architecture in unauthorized and unregulated ways. Entering buildings at will and escaping the watchdog surveillance of both cameras and culture is a mighty aphrodisiac to those who feel a bit fenced in.

Ninjalicious, intrepid boy-explorer and editor of *Infiltration*, provides paper and cyber forums for those who seek abandoned missile sites, unguarded skyscrapers, cavernous drains, subway tunnels and catacombs. "At any point," he says, "where I feel I can afford the luxury, I let my imagination run where it pleases... Some locations, such as unlit storm drains, even allow me to break the laws of physics and imagine I'm walking down a tunnel towards the center of the Earth. I love this kind of thing."

Why love this kind of thing and relinquish our utilitarian perception of built structures and infiltrate? The desire to enter into potentially dangerous and hidden structures is more complex than a youthful desire for a creepy good-time place to drink and fornicate. Our contemporary relationship with surveillance and paranoia fuels our need to survey, be surveyed and elude surveillance. Navigating occupied buildings and exploring lonesome and derelict dwellings allows one just that catharsis. What type of person wants to do this and has the time to do it? Ninjalicious states that he is not quite sure there is a generic infiltrator, "I'd say that most of us are male, middle class, mildly rebellious. We are not exactly anarchists, but we are often dismissive or distrustful of authority figures. A large number of people who are interested in infiltrating are also into other persecuted, non-commercial activities like skateboarding and hacking."

Hacking and skateboarding, like infiltrating, reorganize space in ways not originally designed by any engineer or architect. The infiltrator redefines the limits of public access to architecture. Buildings provide shelter, but they also facilitate unplanned adventure in a dark vacant sanitarium hallway or a cushy-carpet high rise hotel.

The Toronto Authorities, the legal denizens of *Infiltration's* hometown, are not so sure. They perceive that the vulnerable public needs protection from itself. They have demanded that Ninjalicious remove information from his website that facilitates the *Infiltration* of Toronto buildings. Ninjalicious described their current relationship as "kind of immature."

"We only talk to each other through the media: 'You tell Ninjalicious that he owes us a million dollars for all the new security systems we've had to install at City Hall because of his website.' 'Oh yeah? Well you tell the Committee of Public Safety that I probably saved the city a lot of money by investigating all its security flaws free of charge.' And so on. They've never contacted me and I've never contacted them."

From Pilgrim depictions of the "Great Wilderness" to lurid visions of Martian aggressors, the human ability to perceive great hostile wildernesses where there are none is coupled with a human desire to be protected and for all intents and purposes, watched. Closed circuit security camera systems are increasingly omnipresent and Ninjalicious is alarmed by this preponderance of surveillance, but is it so foreign to the human condition? High encircling walls secured medieval towns. Wives' tales warned villagers of what lurked just outside of the known community. Whether you are abducted from a circle of rocks by a large-eyed fairy or from a circle of scorched earth by smooth-skinned aliens, the underlying message is clear: stay home.

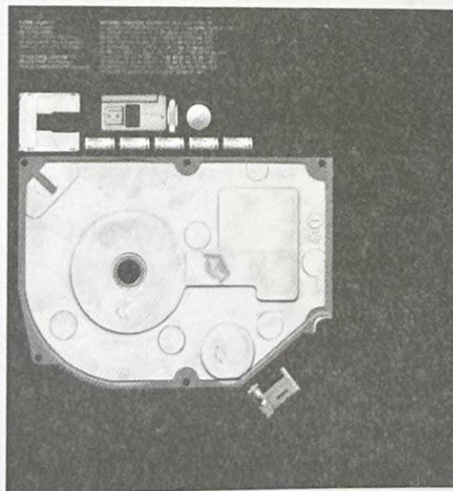
Yet Ninjalicious chooses not to stay at home. He adapts both modern and antiquated forms of paranoia to suit his needs: "I do get scared by heights, strange noises and things like that, but I've learned to revel in it rather than avoid it. I can't remember the last time I felt unsafe. I probably should on occasion, because I'm sure I'd lose if someone chose to attack me, but I just don't think that way. I'm quite convinced that the world is my playground."

Contrary to Ninjalicious's behavior, the cultivation of fear has generally been instrumental to human survival. Without omniscient gods and community strictures, a vacuum is created. Our unstated thirst for surveillance is nostalgic desire for the controlling mechanisms of yore. Is this why the general notion prevails that our safety is contingent upon the politics of paranoia since our cameras are the only way to control a population that is too large for village mandates? Ninjalicious writes: "Non-Covert Cameras: For the most part, the watchers are not subtle, nor do they appear to be ashamed of themselves. In fact, the majority of cameras seem designed not to catch true criminals, who can easily spot the cameras and work around them, but to intimidate ordinary people into being on their best behavior."

What if these cameras aren't enough to assuage our paranoid desires for absolute safety? In true Ninja fashion, Ninjalicious has vanquished, or maybe merely subjugated, the straightjacket of paranoia: "Paranoia is absolutely necessary, since everyone is out to get you and in many buildings you can't escape the gaze of the security cameras. Paranoia reminds you to stay in character and be extremely careful at all times." ☺

sean baca

undanceable dance music



FOR THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, dance music has provided a sensory-heavy environment for the listener to escape into an abstract universe where the harshness of reality is abandoned for heightened states of bliss. Early on, in an attempt to overstep the constructs of any particular genre, DJs chose to play bass-heavy beats with smooth, fluid progressions that allowed audiences a quick, almost universal connection. Pioneers furthered this atmospheric approach by stripping away any semblance of the expected, removing recognizable instrumentation, lyrics and even structure from the mix. Through the use of new technology, they heightened the experience to an almost psychedelic level by employing computer-driven effects, manipulated samples and rhythmic progressions that became the antithesis to the mainstream radio anthem. It was an exploration in feeling, not face.

Lately, new experimental hybrids of electronica continue contemporary culture's sound exploration. Collectively referred to as Intelligent Dance Music (IDM), this somewhat recent genre seeks to redefine the boundaries of the dance culture by expanding its sphere in terms of space and sound. Associated with artists such as the Aphex Twin, Autechre and Boards of Canada, IDM architecturally designs sound structures with mathematical precision, splicing mutated beats, textural equations and formulated codes. Often cited as an established origin point, Warp Records suggests an alternative function for electronica in its 1992 *Artificial Intelligence* compilation, which calls for electronic "Listening Music" that is meant for the "Living Room." Since then, other labels have followed suit, signing a number of the avant-garde who, in some form or another, extract the rhythmic fluidity and ambient expression from the club atmosphere and reinterpret it for the domestic environment. The result is an infectious breed of undanceable dance music that elevates the listener to new levels of dimension and clarity in an everyday existence. With its calculated precision and digitized network of layering, it

is an ever-present soundtrack that defines meaning through chaos, allowing the infinite to be dealt with as the finite.

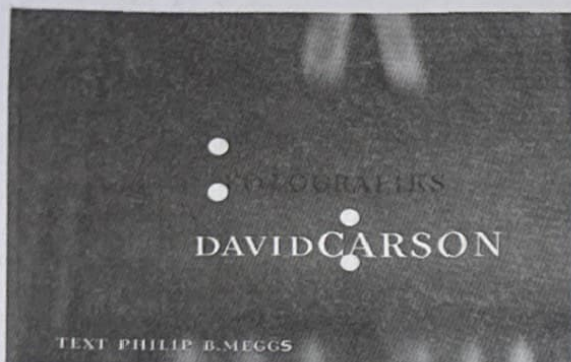
Many albums of late embrace this experimental approach, covering the entire range of electronic diversity. Visionary from the start, Warp Records celebrates its tenth anniversary with a series of anthologies commemorating its right-brain approach to electronica. Most notable in the experimental realm is *Warp 10+3 Remixes* (Matador/Warp), which offers an eclectic assortment of artists who contribute in the name of exploration. But be warned. Remixes should not be considered a starting point for the curious observer to test drive. As with any reworked classic, think of it as a supplement, revealing a new, and in many cases, completely divergent approach to the typical "Warp" sound. Indie fans will be interested in noting that the cast includes groups such as Stereolab and Mogwai. The former is an undulating, lounge-lizard take on Boards of Canada's "Kid for Today" which fluctuates between textures and time signatures, using their own brand of keyboard playfulness that adds a level of perky abandonment. Four Tet float an acoustic, groove-ridden jam over one of Aphex Twin's classics so that not once throughout the whole composition is the listener reminded of his grizzly grin. Oval takes the Donkey Kong drum 'n' bass of Squarepusher's "Big Loada" and implodes it to the size of a pin head – but one with lots of activity. Like a miniature mic dropped into an overlooked microcosm, the remix brings to mind the magnified sound of a heated battle between two aggressive insects. ISAN approaches Seefeel's minimalist style by downloading Ether-fuzz from outer space that cascades into an Autechre-like progression of beats and patterns. Mira Calix irradiates Seefeel's "Air Eyes," invoking a style that is both gothic and radioactive. Other remixes recall the original's identity so that the listener is immediately aware of its fractured blueprint. Push Button Object's rendition of "An Eagle In Your Mind" harkens directly back to its counterpart,

allowing enough of the old to filter through amidst new waves of caustic hip-hop and stiletto soundbytes. Richard Devine reworks Aphex Twin's "Come to Daddy" with enough skill and sobriety that he might have originally composed it himself (which is always a possibility). A couple of the tracks fall short of entertaining, (the most notable being Labradford's unlistenable mutation of LFO, which features a deafening, high-pitched frequency rendering it useless), but for the most part it is a fascinating attempt at showcasing artists who strive to push the boundaries of the expected. This is not a pure IDM specimen to say the least, but it does succeed in capturing the same progressive luster and interactive architecture inherent in the originals, making it a noteworthy addition to any follower's collection.

On the other hand, after a few seconds of IDM composer Michael Fakesch's "Marion" (Musik Aus Strom), it is immediately obvious that his compositions become a trump card to the phenomenon. Representing one half of Funkstorung (meaning radio interference), "Marion" captures a sublime balance between electronic form and formula, while at the same time exuding a completely humanistic side. There is always a driver behind the wheel, it seems. Through a complex superstructure of layering and sampling, Fakesch fuses mechanized beat structures and decaying waves of sound with semi-coherent lullabies, creating a delicate style all his own. Opening with "Demonstration," the complex rhythms are like harpsichord wires, ripped out of their original environment and stretched tightly around large metallic drums that rotate toward a vanishing point. In "Rand Va," surface textures fade from one source to the next, amidst the clamor of deconstructing loops and multi-tasking environments. "Jazdrive" sounds like the freeform sessions of a jazz drummer, trapped inside the belly of a vacuum cleaner that is teetering on the edge of a cliff. Diesehle is particularly good featuring packets of sound firing into a thick wall of frothing fuzz, and showering the

listener in a flood of breakbeats. As the record progresses, the listener is particularly aware of the amount of organic warmth that radiates from the chaos. "Sega," the final track, attacks with an onslaught of percussive tenacity that travels in arcs of static and bass approaching infinity in frequency, yet never actually touching. All in all, Fakesch delivers a masterpiece, boasting ten solid gems that have been created with the precision of a scientist and curiosity of a child.

Only in the IDM paradigm of cut and paste can composers like Phoenecia deliver a remarkable, forty-plus-minute EP based on a single track that has been remixed and packaged as seven separate versions. Even more twisted is that the composers credited with the release are completely absent from the record. "Odd Jobs," released on the US label Schematic, offers up its own brand of "electrotecture" with remixes by a host of IDM favorites. Although not a full-length play, this record ranks as one of my recent favorites due to the completely urban-underground vibe that is comparable to visiting a modern art museum. Through an inner connectivity that seems to be spawned from dreams, "Odd Jobs" is a Dadaist collage, full of pulsing sound fragments and audible revelations that seem to affect the listener on a subconscious level. Take the first two tracks reprogrammed by Soul Oddity, which suggest the undeniable sensation of heavy rotation through space. Using transformed 909 beats and cerebral samplings, the listener is caught up in the jet stream of thought. Autechre provide a backmasking remix that seems appropriate to the wormhole sequence from the movie "Contact," where the circumstance of a hyperreality reduces time to an insignificant level. Push Button Objects allude to a groovy, almost danceable quality that allows the track to slither between surface-hiss scratching and ionized hip-hop. Consistently worth more than the price of a single, "Odd Jobs" transcends genres and is once again a must for the IDM enthusiast. ☉



FOTOGRAFIKS,

An equilibrium between PHOTOgraphy and Design through graphic expression that evolves FROM CONTENT. Or: Photography with a graphic design attitude.

Fotos by David Carson
Text by Philip B. Meggs
Ginkgo Press, 1999

NO ONE DOUBTS DAVID CARSON'S IMPORTANCE in the world of graphic design. In some future look back at early 90s design, readers will be confronted with layouts featuring pictures crowded by disorganized words, looking like ants swarming around spilt honey. The caption will read, "David Carson: bad boy of graphic design." With his work, initially in *Transworld Skateboarding*, later *Beach Culture* and, more publicized, in *Ray Gun* magazine, he completely re-worked how text appears on the page. Carson refused to simply layout text with simple functionality as his guide. Instead, he used every word, character and space as a way to create an overall look on the page. His absolute re-thinking of how text is represented on the page lead *Newsweek* to say he "changed the public face of graphic design."

Fotografiks has nothing to do with all that. The book features page after full-bleed page of Carson's photographs along with text by Philip B. Meggs. Of course, the whole thing is laid out by Carson and the result is that the design takes over from the images, something I'm sure countless photographers have complained about in the past. One double-page spread is a color-play of blurred forms. Some of them are mostly acid green, gray, lime or black. When the images lose their inherent interest, Carson intercepts them with another blurry image. It is very pretty. Yet, instead of highlighting Carson's work as a photographer, the book confirms his ability to use Design layout and irrational point size changes to tell much of the story. The result is the pictures look as though they were taken with the *Fotografiks* book design already in mind. Still, it looks pretty damn cool. (JX)



The Upskirts:

RADIATION ROMEO'S B/W PANDA STOMP 7"
(RocknRoll Blitzkrieg)

I have always been obsessed with the idea of purity of form. Rock and Roll is supposed to be loud, fast and out of control, but very few bands get that. By rock and roll's very nature, it's dangerous. It's not an intellectual pursuit; it's pure adrenaline. The Upskirts know this. The cover says it all; this is indeed a stereo punk rock record. Never mind that they are from Sweden. AC/DC came from Australia and they played rock and roll better than any American band in the late 70s. My favorite track is the flip side, Panda Stomp. How can you beat the line, "I'm a new wave hooker" sung over buzz chord strumming? Buy this record, play it loud. No turntable? This probably isn't for you anyway. Write Rock and Roll Blitzkrieg at PO Box 11906, Berkeley CA 94712. With a limited edition of 500, this piece of punk rock redemption will soon be gone.

The Busy Signals:

BABY'S FIRST BEATS (Sugar Free)

The Busy Signals are one man and lot of Brian Wilson-style tinkering. The result is cotton candy pop so light it almost melts in the air. I mean this in a good way. I listened to this record on a rainy day and the sun almost seemed to shine from my speakers and I half imagined animated birds and butterflies would flutter around me. And I wasn't on drugs. What I like about the record is the laid back sampled beats that re-occur and save this from being an Apples in Stereo rip-off. Sure, it has that orchestrated pop sound of the late '60s, but the beats are on. File between Pet Sounds and 3 Feet High and Rising.

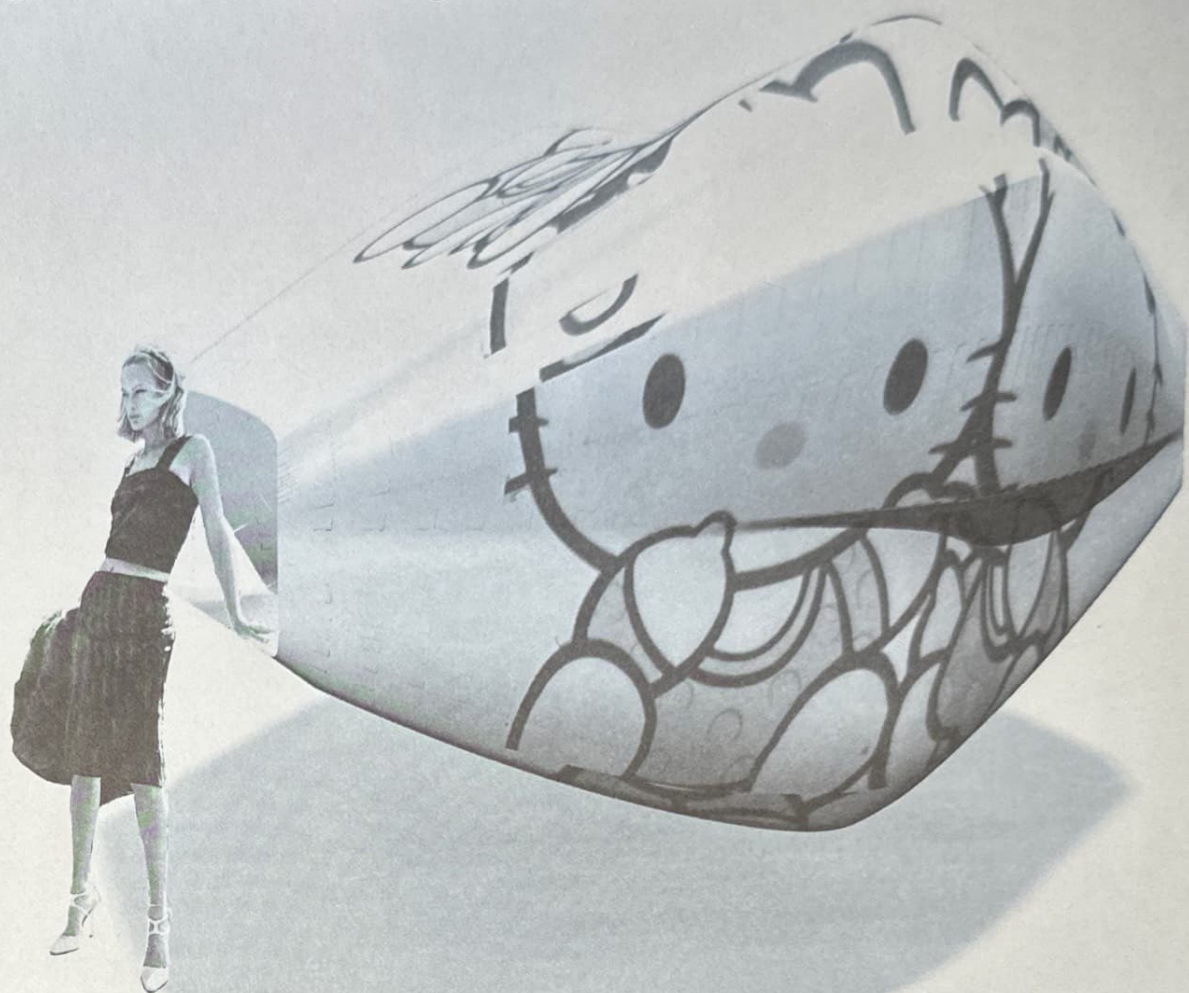
VUE:

VUE (Sub Pop)

Vue beg the musical question, "What if Adam and the Ants tried to be the Birthday Party?" The answer? The music would kick ass. This is the sloppiest record I've heard in a long time. It's full of disjointed rhythms and angular pickings like Rowland S. Howard trademarked in the Birthday Party, but Vue singer Rex John Shelverton sounds just like Adam Ant. It's a combo that works. Recommended if you like black eyeliner, loud rock and roll and cheap beer. (JX)



If you lived here, you would be home by now.



moa:HOME tool shed no.990005

ministry of architecture - ministry of design - usa uk aus

The contemporary, populist culture is a consuming, cut-and-paste phenomenon, capable of absorbing and assimilating change. For architecture to be accessible to this emerging global class, architects must be sympathetic to ready-to-wear desires. The Ministry of Architecture - Ministry of Design [MOA-MOD] intends to push architecture off its elitist pedestal and into accessibility: Out of the Museums and Into the Streets.

The MOA label, currently in production, is a "line" or "collection" of products describing, or accessible to, aspects of the populist culture: pret-a-porter [ready-to-wear] through the haute couture [costume]. Methodologies inherent to fashion design [prêt-a-porter or bottom-up vs. haute couture or top-down] are here used to describe an accessible, or ready-to-wear, architectural product for the contemporary commodity culture. MOA-MOD will demonstrate a

technique of architectural practice sensitive to the variables of this emergent culture - practice will be reorganized to engage space fashionably.

Disclaimer: Any information attached or enclosed with this transmittal are for information purposes only. The Ministry of Architecture - Ministry of Design offer no warranty and accept no liability whatsoever arising out of, or in connection with the use or misuse of this data.

url: moa-mod.com / email: israel@sciarc.edu